

Metaphor and Ideology

Biblical Interpretation Series

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Metaphor and Ideology

Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum and Literary
Methods through a Cognitive Lens

by

Mary Therese DesCamp



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INTRODUCTION

This monograph is an attempt to use the findings of contemporary cognitive linguistics to analyze an ancient text. As a scholar, my motive is not to prove that this new methodology is more interesting than all other methodologies. Rather, I am attempting to address my own discomfort with the endless rounds of interpretation offered by literary critics. While I am delighted to be able to speak of reading from a feminist or womanist or two-thirds world perspective, I feel great distrust of literary theories that argue that meaning is only relative and put into the text by the reader. If that were true, we would never be able to speak to each other about what we have read because we would all have read something different.

Cognitive linguistics metaphor and blending theory, which bases its understanding of linguistic formations and interpretation in the physiology of the human body, argues that because we share basically the same physiology, we are able to understand the majority of each other's linguistic constructions. When we share a culture, the number of things we understand in common increases even more.

In the eyes of the cognitive sciences, all meanings may be possible but they are not equally intended. Human physiology and cultural constructs establish lines beyond which critics may choose to go, but not with any claim to be interpreting a text as it is understood by the majority of the culture. Cognitive linguistics attempts to uncover the most common meaning, rather than the most entertaining. An analysis using this methodology can, I believe, show that what creative and insightful critics do intuitively can be explained systematically, with reference to and in harmony with the scientific findings about human cognition.

With this in mind, I believed that a cognitive analysis of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* might shed light on some of its difficulties and give a reading that is close to what the author actually intended. This is a bold claim—an outrageous claim, actually—in view of the state of literary theory, but it is the purpose of this work nonetheless.

This monograph will proceed by examining two different but related questions. The first is a methodological question: *Is contemporary Cognitive Linguistic Blending Theory a reasonable methodology for the examination of a 1st*

century Jewish text? The second question is: *What do the stories of women say about the theology and ideology of Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum?*

I will begin first by providing a brief overview of the text in question in Chapter One. As concisely as possible, I will sketch the history of *LAB* as it is known, and review the most important scholarly works of the past two decades.

In Chapter Two, I will describe the nature of contemporary Cognitive Blending Analysis. When I began this work, I envisioned the methodological chapters as an exploration of the interaction of narrative, rhetorical, and cognitive linguistic methodologies. However, I quickly became convinced that narrative and rhetorical theories lack the defensible philosophical and scientific grounding that cognitive linguistic blending theory exhibits. Blending theory, because of its reliance upon cognitive psychology and neural research, presents a way of analyzing and relating the bits and pieces that narrative and rhetorical critics have identified as important for their work within the broader understanding of how cognition actually takes place in the human brain and how physiology and cultural knowledge interact. And so, instead of a meeting of equals, this monograph has taken contemporary narrative and rhetorical theories and analyzed them in terms of cognitive blending. This re-conceptualization allows the author to speak not only of how the text moves and makes meaning, but *why* it makes the kind of meaning that it does.

In Chapter Three, I will view the narrative theory of Robert Alter through the lens of cognitive research; Chapter Four will examine Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's rhetorical theory through the same refraction. In each of these chapters, I will use examples from *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*; and at the end of each chapter I will perform a reading showing how the methodology works.

After addressing these methodological questions, this monograph will explore just how the text makes meaning, and what meaning it makes. Chapter Five will analyze how the re-use of biblical stories is cognitively understood by a reader, while Chapter Six will explore the ways that biblical stories are used outside of their original contexts, and what this might mean for the theology and ideology of the text. Chapter Seven will examine how the reshaping of biblical metaphors found in *LAB* gives new meaning to those familiar tropes. Chapter Eight will look at how authority is awarded to characters, while Chapter Nine examines the importance of humility in the character of a leader. In Chapter

Ten, I will explore the reasons why, and the ways in which, women are reshaped as mother figures.

In my conclusions, Chapter Eleven, I will address the two questions with which I began. First, I will argue that cognitive blending theory is preferable to either narrative or rhetorical methods for the evaluation of this text. Then, I will present my conclusions regarding authority and re-written Bible, Pseudo-Philo's worldview, and the role of the stories of women in this text, which I contend are central to its theology and ideology. I will maintain that by consistently portraying women in the role of mother, Pseudo-Philo attempts to sneak women's comments, interpretations, and instructions "under the radar." When one defines motherhood, the most conventional of female roles, so as to include the authority to speak, one avoids dealing with the question of whether women should be interpreting scripture and speaking out about the life of the community. If it's part of a mother's traditional work, how can it be wrong?

Throughout this monograph I will refer to the author of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* as either Pseudo-Philo or "she." I use the female pronoun because I am convinced that this text is written from the perspective of a woman. Not a "feminist", not a fanatic, maybe not even someone who wants to speak in synagogue; but a someone whose view of the world is centered on marriage, fertility and children and who is disturbed by the disintegration of family, faith and covenant in her own community.

Therese DesCamp, March 2007

PART ONE

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE TEXT AND
COGNITIVE METHODS

CHAPTER ONE

PSEUDO-PHILO'S *LIBER ANTIQUITATUM BIBLICARUM*

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO TEXT

*Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*¹ is a text written by an unknown Jewish author² sometime between 50 C.E. and 150 C.E.³ It is generally classified as “re-written bible”, that is, a document which

takes the biblical text itself as the focus of attention... Using the framework of scripture, these documents include elements from the biblical narrative but freely omit words and whole incidents and add material without any foundation in the text.⁴

Pseudo-Philo retells the biblical narrative from creation through the rise of King David, with major emphasis on the book of Judges. New names, details and dialogue appear, paraphrases of biblical text are mixed with direct quotes, the biblical narrative is drastically revised, and large sections of scripture are summarized peremptorily. While some summaries and expansions follow naturally from the biblical text, others seem to contradict it.

1.1.1 *Elements of Textual History: Language, Dating, Origin*

While all extant manuscripts of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* are in Latin, Harrington has argued convincingly for a Hebrew *vorlage*, which was translated into Greek and finally into Latin, no later than the 4th century

¹ I will also refer to this text as *LAB* throughout this monograph.

² Commonly referred to as Pseudo-Philo.

³ I am following the dating of Howard Jacobson, *A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1996) 199–210. Other scholars, such as Daniel J. Harrington, prefer a date between 135 B.C.E. and 100 C.E. Harrington, “Pseudo-Philo: A New Translation and Introduction,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Volume II*. (Ed. James H. Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1985) 299.

⁴ Daniel J. Harrington, “Adaptation of Narratives,” in *Early Judaism and its Modern Interpreters*, (ed. R. A. Kraft and G. W. E. Nickelsburg; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986) 240.

C.E.⁵ As part of his argument, Harrington posits that *LAB* uses a Palestinian text type for its biblical quotations; because of this contention, he holds that *LAB* was written in Palestine⁶ before 100 C.E.⁷

Virtually all scholars agree that *LAB*'s original language was Hebrew; however, Howard Jacobson takes issue with Harrington's argument that Pseudo-Philo used a Palestinian text type in the production of this work.⁸ Jacobson believes that it is almost impossible to determine what biblical text the author had available because she so often paraphrases rather than quotes scripture directly. He does concede that the text seems to differ from the Masoretic text on occasion, but he points out that there is hardly consistency in those variations. Jacobson believes that the variations in biblical "text" exhibited by *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* are most likely due to the manner of its composition; he argues that it was an oral creation composed with great dependence on memory.⁹

Nor do scholars agree on the dating of this document. While there are differences of 50 to 85 years on either end, the great debate is reserved for whether the text originated before or after the fall of Jerusalem. For the purposes of this study, this is not a central consideration: but what is worth noticing is that the text is so unclear about this point as to engender debate.¹⁰

⁵ Harrington, Daniel J., "The Original Language of Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*," *HTR* 63 (1970) 503–514. Harrington's theory is not new, but he marshals the evidence scrupulously. He argues that the most "satisfactory type of evidence is that of mistranslation implying a Greek or a Semitic base." He goes on to examine these possible mistranslations and to eliminate the likelihood that the Semitic original might have been Aramaic instead of Hebrew.

⁶ Only Cheryl Anne Brown disagrees with the Palestinian provenance and places the text in Syria. See Brown, *No Longer Be Silent: First Century Jewish Portraits of Biblical Women* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992) 216.

⁷ Harrington, Daniel J., "The Biblical Text of Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*," *CBQ* 33 (1971) 1–17.

⁸ Jacobson, following Feldman, argues that textual variability continued for some time after 100 C.E. and hence one need not assume that date as the terminus post quem. *Commentary*, 210.

⁹ Jacobson, *Commentary*, 254–56. This speculation by Jacobson fits neatly with my own research on the likelihood of female authorship. See DesCamp, Mary Therese, "Why Are These Women Here? An Examination of the Sociological Setting of Pseudo-Philo through Comparative Reading," *JSP* 16 (1997) 53–80.

¹⁰ Certainly, the fact that *LAB* is only concerned with re-telling the first 8 books of the Bible has some bearing here. But one would think that if the fall of the temple had been a major event in the life of the community, it would have leaked through into the text some way. For instance, it is not hard to see that the author of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* was well acquainted with worship in local synagogues. For a thorough review of the arguments regarding date of this text, see Jacobson's introduction, 199–210.

1.1.2 *Manuscripts*

There are 18 complete and 3 fragmentary texts of *LAB*, all in Latin, and all of German or Austrian origin. The earliest work dates from the 11th century; the latest from the 15th. These texts fit into two major families designated Δ and Π . Both of these families appear to result from the same Latin archetype.

The *editio princeps* was published in 1527 by Johannes Sichardus, using an 11th century text designated Fulda-Cassel Theol. 4^o,3 (designated now by scholars as K) as well as another text from the Lorsch monastery which has since been lost. It appears that both of these texts belonged to the Δ family. Soon after Sichardus' publication, Pseudo-Philo again passed from the view of scholars, only to be re-discovered in 1898 by Cohn, and translated into English in 1917 by M. R. James.

The critical Latin edition was prepared by Harrington and published in 1976, along with commentary in French by Perrot and Bogaert.¹¹

One of the great difficulties of the text is the frequency with which it was subjected to translation. This document not only made the passage from Hebrew to Greek to Latin, but scholars are now relatively certain that the Latin sources for the extant manuscripts were undivided and written in uncials.¹² Hence we find many errors or difficulties regarding names, confusion caused by misreading letters, and so on, in addition to the problems inherent in any translation process.

1.1.3 *Problems of Authorship and Identification*

In the Middle Ages this text was customarily found in a volume containing Chapter 11 of Jerome's *De Viris Illustribus* (being a chapter on Philo of Alexandria) along with Philo's *Quaestiones et solutions in Genesium*. The author of the *editio princeps* attributed the document, therefore, to Philo; but since the 16th century scholars have been questioning this attribution.

For modern commentators a more appropriate question is, *Why would anyone ever attribute this text to Philo?* No contemporary scholar takes seriously the argument that Philo of Alexandria authored this

¹¹ Harrington, Daniel J., *Pseudo-Philon Les Antiquités Bibliques: Tome I: Introduction et Texte Critiques*. (Translated by Jacques Cazeaux; Paris: Cerf, 1976). Charles Perrot and Pierre-Maurice Bogaert, *Pseudo-Philon Les Antiquités Bibliques: Tome II: Introduction Littéraire, Commentaire et Index*. (Paris: Cerf, 1976).

¹² See Jacobson, *Commentary*, 268, for summary of recent findings.

text. *LAB* directly contradicts Philo in its chronology as well as in the portrayal of particular biblical personages. Philo and *LAB* also show significant differences in style and literary character. For example, as Brown notes, biblical characters in Philo are generally allegorical, and women in particular are portrayed positively only when they represent greater spiritual realities.¹³ Pseudo-Philo, on the other hand, does not use allegory, and he sketches biblical women who are clearly human as well as positive examples. In addition, Pseudo-Philo contains obvious Hebraisms as well as apocryphal material not found in Philo's works.

Jacobson posits that the text circulated anonymously in its Greek translation until someone felt the need to attribute it to an identifiable person. Of the two prominent Jewish authors who wrote in Greek during the time of *LAB*, Josephus already was credited with a prose history of the Jewish nation. Hence, it was assumed to be the work of Philo.¹⁴ In this Jacobson argues against Cohn et al who believe that *LAB* was first bound with Philo's work, and then later attributed to him.

One of the difficulties when attempting to trace a history of this text is the lack of a consistent title. *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is a modern title, and is not found as such on any Latin manuscripts, though *Philonis Antiquitatum Liber* is the 14th century label on the 11th century K manuscript. Sichardus called his edition *Antiquitates*, or *Liber Antiquitatum*, probably in comparison to Josephus' work. The titles used to refer to this text when it is cited in ancient works include *Hystoria ab inicio mundi usque ad David regem*, *De successione generationum veteris testamenti*, *Genesis*, *In Genesium*, and *Initium Mundi*. Albertus Magnus (13th century) refers to the work as *Quaestiones* because of its inclusion with Philo's *Quaestiones et solutions in Genesim*. Nicholas of Cusa, in the 15th century, referred to it as *Historiae* even though the manuscript he used was entitled *In Genesium*.

1.1.4 Usage¹⁵

There is no record of Jewish usage of this text until Azariah Dei Rossi in the 16th century. While scholars see similarities with 2 Baruch and 4 Esdras, there appears to be no direct relationship between these works.

¹³ Brown, *No Longer Be Silent*, 214.

¹⁴ Jacobson, *Commentary*, 196.

¹⁵ My source for this section is Edmé R. Smits, "A Contribution to the History of Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* in the Middle Ages", *JSJ* 23 (1992) 197–216.

Some of *LAB*'s amplifications on the biblical text appear to be the earliest occurrences of those particular interpretations; other changes parallel rabbinic tradition. But no exact link can be traced; they may merely share ancient sources.

Christian usage is similarly difficult to document, as the lack of a uniform title has greatly hindered research. Allusions and similarities have been found in the early church fathers, e.g. Clement of Alexandria and Origen, but the evidence is insufficient to argue prior knowledge of the text.

LAB was known to Hrabanus Maurus (780–856), who appears to have used it extensively in his work, and Helinand of Froidmont drew on Pseudo-Philo in his *Chronicon* (written 1215–20). Helinand used the text to clarify dates and names that might be confused or contradictory in other sources. It is difficult to ascertain whether he used a direct or indirect source; it may be that *LAB* was incorporated as part of the *Glossa Ordinaria*, the most important biblical commentary of Helinand's time, and that Helinand used the *Glossa* as his source.¹⁶

Albert Magnus used the text a century later; and Nicholas of Cusa cited it to date the flood, and predict the end of the world when he wrote in the 15th century.

Given the fact that this text is only recently recovered for the world of scholarship, the meager number of citations to be found, and the paucity of noticeable influence on Jewish or Christian thought, one might assume that *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* was a marginal and little used source. It is a mistake, however, to think that present day non-canonical status automatically translates into the text being hidden and borderline in its own time. As Jacobson points out, the fact that this text was "twice translated and still survives in some twenty manuscripts suggests that it must have been a work of some popularity."¹⁷ This popularity must have been an early trait since the translation to Latin occurred by the 4th century. One can only assume that whatever widespread appeal Pseudo-Philo had, it faded quickly.

1.1.5 *Relationship to Other Books*

LAB shares a number of characteristics with 2 Baruch and 4 Esdras, both of which have been dated to late first century C.E. Similarities

¹⁶ Smits, "Contribution," 19.

¹⁷ Jacobson, *Commentary*, 273.

include assumptions about the existence of evil spirits and angels and a coming eschatological world. *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* does not, however, share their focus on a Messiah or Messianic kingdom, nor—according to most scholars—does it openly acknowledge the fall of Jerusalem. While Pseudo-Philo is full of esoteric beliefs, these beliefs are presented as background knowledge rather than central and essential teachings of the text. Finally, *LAB* does not share the “eschatological fever” of its near contemporaries.¹⁸

In form, *LAB* resembles the *Book of Jubilees*, Josephus’ *Antiquities*, and the *Genesis Apocryphon* more closely than any of the other pseudepigrapha. Feldman argued that at least one purpose of *LAB* may have been to correct the information presented in *Jubilees*.¹⁹ His examination of the relationship of Pseudo-Philo to other texts of the time, including those previously noted as well as *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, the Targumim and midrash, led him to argue that the similarities of style, content, and method between the texts are more likely due to common Palestinian tradition rather than direct dependence.

1.2 SYNOPSIS OF CONTEMPORARY SCHOLARSHIP

M. R. James published the first English translation of *LAB* in 1917. His work was not a critical edition but was based on four manuscripts, including the *editio princeps*.

James was not impressed by the literary skills of the author of *LAB*, calling the style “exceedingly monotonous”.²⁰ However, he did consider Pseudo-Philo an important representative of first century Jewish writing.

James argued that *LAB*’s author intended to supplement existing narratives and infuse a more “religious” tone into some difficult episodes. The author, he claimed, wanted to remind those hearing/reading the text that Israel was indestructible, and that the Israelites had an eternal duty of faithfulness to God. According to James, the greatest dangers described in *LAB* are idolatry and union with gentiles. Commentators

¹⁸ Frederick J. Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo: Rewriting the Bible* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) 257.

¹⁹ Louis H. Feldman, “Prolegomenon,” in *The Biblical Antiquities of Philo*, M. R. James (New York: Ktav, 1971) LII.

²⁰ M. R. James, *The Biblical Antiquities of Philo* (New York: Ktav, 1971) 29.

from James until the present day continue to identify these points as central to Pseudo-Philo's worldview.

Louis H. Feldman wrote the "Prolegomenon" to James' text when it was re-issued in 1971, in which he contends that Pseudo-Philo is a significant link between early *haggadah* and later rabbinic midrash. Like James, he views *LAB* as an important source of information about the early Talmudic period because it was not "tampered with" by Christians. He notes, "[W]here *LAB* is paralleled by rabbinic midrash, it often represents the oldest extant source."²¹

Feldman reviews other scholars' ideas of possible purposes for the text, and concludes that the only viable suggestions are polemic against intermarriage and biblical apologetic. He argues that apologetic dealing with embarrassing biblical details is permissible per the Talmud; in fact, with the exception of one statement about divorce, he finds *LAB* consonant with rabbinic practice. *LAB*'s polemical nature against intermarriage, he argues, is proved by the repeated re-writing of biblical stories to emphasize the evils of intermarriage.

Daniel Harrington, who authored the critical Latin text now used by scholars, published that text in concert with **Charles Bogaert** and **Pierre-Maurice Perrot** in 1976. The two-volume work combines Harrington's text (with French translation by **Jaques Cazeaux**), and Bogaert and Perrot's commentary.

Perrot's introduction to the commentary treats the theological ideas of Pseudo-Philo; he argues that the main themes of the text are the covenant, the indestructibility of Israel and God's sovereign control. Perrot sees Pseudo-Philo arguing for a religion of the heart, whereby the law is interiorized.²² He further argues that *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* moves in the direction of universalism, in contrast for instance to the writings at Qumran.²³

Perrot believes that *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* addresses the spirit of anti-nominism which was abroad in Palestine prior to the fall of

²¹ Feldman, "Prolegomenon", X.

²² Perrot says Pseudo-Philo is not just some narrow spirited scribe but an "apostle of internalized religion." "Le Pseudo-Philon est l'apôtre d'une religion intérieure." Perrot, *Pseudo-Philon*, 45.

²³ "On ne peut donc refuser au Pseudo-Philon, une réelle ouverture dans le sens de l'universalisme, alors qu'à Qumrân, par exemple, les anciennes prophéties d'espoir concernant les Nations sont systématiquement éliminées." Perrot, *Pseudo-Philon*, 45–6. I'm not quite certain how Perrot squares his remarks with Pseudo-Philo's continual polemic against intermarriage.

the temple. In this, he places the author among the diverse Jewish movements who were critical of the cultural institutions of the Temple including sacrifice. He does not, however, locate Pseudo-Philo in any well-known group such as the Pharisees.

Perrot's theology includes a short section entitled *Le féminisme du Pseudo-Philon*. This mere page has sparked a large number of subsequent articles, including one by this author, concerning *LAB*'s treatment of women. Perrot's assessment of the portrayal of women in Pseudo-Philo—which he argues is unusually positive—will be examined more closely in Chapter Ten.

Harrington is also responsible for a new English translation of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, as well as studies on the original language, biblical text type, use of biblical geography, and form of Pseudo-Philo. He concurs with general opinion that the book “reflects the milieu of the Palestinian synagogues at the turn of the common era.”²⁴

Harrington's theological findings are presented in pithy fashion, but he agrees with James and Feldman that the most reprehensible sins are idolatry and intermarriage. He argues that Israel is only punished when Israel sins, and argues for the Deuteronomistic concept of history where salvation follows punishment (he does not speak of repentance). God has mercy because of the covenant with the fathers, but one is always punished for sin.

While Harrington notes the “interesting plays on Old Testament clichés from what would now be described as a feminist perspective,”²⁵ he makes no attempt to analyze these revisions.

Harrington notes that because of the date and style of this text, it is an important witness for the history of Judaism as well as the Christian history. Given that, he wonders why the impact of it has been so slight.

Pieter van der Horst provided the first detailed analysis of *LAB*'s treatment of women; while Perrot had noted the prominence accorded certain women, van der Horst was the first to evaluate and comment upon it in a systematic fashion.

In his 1989 article, van der Horst notes that Pseudo-Philo has “his most important or central religious ideas formulated by women.”²⁶ He

²⁴ Harrington, “Pseudo-Philo: New Translation and Introduction,” 300.

²⁵ Harrington, “Biblical Geography in Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*,” *BASOR* 220 (Oct. 1975) 70.

²⁶ Willem Pieter van der Horst, “Portraits of Biblical Women in Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*,” *JSP* 5 (1989) 33.

argues that Deborah's inaugural speech to the people contains every major theological theme of the book; and he claims that Deborah is shaped into a holy leader equivalent to the patriarchs, while the daughter of Jephthah is elevated to the level of Isaac.

Van der Horst also notes that other alterations to the biblical text elevate the status of women in regard to marriage and divorce, and argues that this treatment is not limited to a few isolated cases but runs throughout the book. Van der Horst goes on to explore the implications of such attention. He notes that it is not based on denigration of (Jewish) male characters, and argues that such an unusual move by the author must be connected to the author's historical situation. While stopping short of claiming female authorship,²⁷ he refuses to rule it out and claims that if the author was a man, he was a "rare bird in ancient Judaism."²⁸

In her 1991 essay, **Betsy Halpern-Amaru** assessed the roles assigned women by the author of Pseudo-Philo. She concludes that there are only three appropriate roles for women: object of divine punishment, instrument of divine retribution, and agent or partner in God's governance of Israel's destiny. Pseudo-Philo, in her examination, exalts motherhood and tends to portray all women in some maternal way—whether as object, instrument, or agent. Those who are not biological mothers—Deborah—are referred to as mothers of Israel. While both Deborah and Seila are appointed by God to assume roles associated with men, their description accentuates their femininity. Jael, whom Amaru-Halpern argues was hitherto independent, is re-described as a pious and less-than-autonomous instrument of God; Hannah's song is transformed from triumphal hymn to a devout celebration of maternity. Sarah and Rebecca get short shrift; only their ability to reproduce is noted. Even strong Tamar is mentioned in the context of a birth story. No woman is portrayed as a supportive spouse nor is there any romantic or erotic development of women except their description as beautiful. Women have only one function, and that is to birth an Israelite hero.²⁹

²⁷ His reasoning is that the text does not involve complete role reversal such as that found in the final seven chapters of the Testament of Job. See my article, *Why Are These Women Here?* for a more extensive discussion of the issues of women's authorship.

²⁸ Van der Horst, "Portraits," 46.

²⁹ Betsy Halpern-Amaru, "Portraits of Women In Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities*," in *Women Like This: New Perspectives on Jewish Women in the Greco-Roman World*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991).

Halpern-Amaru sees no pattern of “feminism” in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. She notes the tendency to make all foreign women negative, while questionable Israelite women are either de-sexualized or silenced by not being mentioned in the text.

Frederic J. Murphy has written numerous articles and one book on *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. In *Pseudo-Philo: Rewriting the Bible*, he attempts a unified narrative reading of the text, focusing on plot and characterization and their relationship to the larger whole.³⁰ Murphy’s work argues that Pseudo-Philo is a “narrative theodicy”³¹ addressing the issues of a generally troubled time of occupation and internal factionalism, rather than a response to a specific event. He claims that the author’s main intent is to exonerate God from charges of capriciousness and abandonment.

Murphy argues that the primary theme of *LAB* is moral causality: each and every punishment is in some way justified, and every sinner will be punished even if that punishment follows death.³² This theme is in tension with the other main theme that Murphy identifies, God’s absolute continuity with and care for God’s people. According to Murphy, God maintains the covenant with Israel not because Israel repents or responds appropriately but because God made promises to the fathers: Israel will never be utterly abandoned or forsaken.

Murphy identifies several other thematic foci in Pseudo-Philo. One is the contrast between human and divine plots. He argues that even a person acting with the best of intentions is liable to err,³³ and hence, for Pseudo-Philo, the correct response to any problem is to pray and trust that God will respond. A good leader is identified by complete dependence on God rather than by bold action or military moves.³⁴

Regarding the evils of intermarriage and idolatry, Murphy argues that the text equates the two because intermarriage by definition involves close association with Gentiles.

³⁰ Eckhardt Reinmuth has also attempted a narrative reading comparing Pseudo-Philo to the gospel of Luke. His focus, however, has been on the use of such narrative features as opening and closing of scenes, geographic and temporal markers, and so on. See E. Reinmuth, *Pseudo-Philo und Lukas: Studien zum Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum und seiner Deutung für die Interpretation des lukanischen Doppelwerks* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1994).

³¹ F. Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo*, 223.

³² See *LAB* 36:4 for God’s decision to punish Gideon posthumously.

³³ Through the course of this study I will make the point that one may be afraid that one will err, and one should certainly confess it before taking action, but no one who admits to that is ever found wanting.

³⁴ Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo*, 234.

Murphy notes the tendency of Pseudo-Philo to draw connections between a narrated event and some other event from a prior period of Jewish history.³⁵ He argues that this invites readers/hearers to make the same kind of connection between the present-day historical situation and the narration.

Murphy also notes the elevation of women's roles but makes no comment on what such an elevation might reveal. In this and in other areas, he declines to engage his results with questions about the community for which Pseudo-Philo was written or the author who wrote it.

Jacobson criticizes Murphy for his narrative reading. Murphy's narrative analysis, Jacobson says, results at times in an interpretation identical to that of the original biblical text.³⁶ But while the general import of the biblical passage may be the same, Jacobson has missed the fact that *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* makes choices to include or emphasize certain things and ignore or excise others, and that both maintaining an existing theme and choosing a new one are important options that can tell us something about the author, the text, and the situation. In general Murphy uses the narrative technique well, although one can't help feeling that he just skims the surface.

Howard Jacobson released an exhaustive commentary on *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* in 1996. This work includes the Latin text, his English translation of the Latin text, and extensive notes in a verse-by-verse format. His work is comprehensive and redactional. He analyzes the possible source of every minute variation from the Masoretic biblical text exhaustively, using multiple biblical traditions, rabbinic and Talmudic references, extrabiblical texts, and so on. Nothing else published thus far can begin to compare in terms of thoroughness and reach.

Jacobson argues that the principal theme of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is that God will never abandon Israel completely, regardless of how hopeless their situation appears to be. A corollary to this thesis is that every thing that occurs—good or bad—is God's doing. Disasters are punishment, even as victories are rewards; God responds to virtually every action in a "measure-for-measure" way. As Jacobson says, "God is in complete control."³⁷ God has a clear plan for the world, and Israel must never doubt that what is befalling them is part of that plan.

³⁵ Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo*, 50. In this assessment Murphy echoes Perrot.

³⁶ Howard Jacobson's review of Murphy's book is highly critical, arguing that Murphy has ignored or mis-cited other scholars and used a faulty Latin text, among other errors. See Jacobson, "Review," *JJS* 41 (1990) 302–11.

³⁷ Jacobson, *Commentary*, 242.

According to Jacobson, Israel's repentance is required prior to salvation, but God will certainly reward the faithful in the end of time.

Jacobson argues that the one essential virtue required of the Israelites is unconditional faith in God. This faith is tested at every turn by Pseudo-Philo's version of idolatry—not idolatry as confined to idol worship, but including association with and interest in foreign ways.³⁸ He argues that the corollary to this virtue is the maintenance of the divine “reputation and credibility.”

Jacobson argues that the main purpose of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is to help the people cope with the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem, by maintaining “[S]uch catastrophes were part of God's plan that ultimately meant salvation for the Jewish people.”³⁹

Jacobson mentions the scholarship looking at Pseudo-Philo's treatment of women without any serious consideration of what these findings might mean for the interpretation of the text overall.

Unfortunately Jacobson's focus on source identification tends to fragmentize the text. He argues that Pseudo-Philo is more of an assembler than an author, and any one who reads his work can see why he believes this: his research on possible sources for the deviations in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is so wide ranging that it would be very easy to lose sight of the fact that the text does actually tell a story.

Jacobson has performed an extraordinary task in these volumes, and the fact that his English text is intelligible is a major accomplishment. He has shed light on many obscure sections of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. However, he sometimes uses English synonyms where the Latin uses identical words or words with the same root. While this can make for pleasurable reading, the reader without a strong Latin background can easily miss word plays, repetitions, chiasms, and other narratological elements; one can also miss the Hebraic flavor that still shines through this multiply translated text.

Cheryl Anne Brown engages in a “descriptive analysis” of four female biblical characters in Pseudo-Philo, and compares *LAB*'s portrayal with that in Josephus' *Biblical Antiquities*.⁴⁰ In her 1992 book, she attempts to discern the author's background, purpose, and audience. She

³⁸ Jacobson's definition of idolatry develops what Murphy noticed about the interrelationship between intermarriage and idolatry.

³⁹ Jacobson, *Commentary*, 253.

⁴⁰ Cheryl Anne Brown, *No Longer Be Silent: First Century Jewish Portraits of Biblical Women* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1992).

argues that, on the whole, women are portrayed positively by Pseudo-Philo, and that the text significantly enhances Jewish women's roles. She further argues that prominent female characters take on Wisdom symbolism in *LAB*. Deborah becomes wisdom for Israel's leaders and the counterpart of Moses; Seila is developed as a female Aqedah and symbol of willing sacrifice; and Hannah becomes a metaphor for Torah that nourishes and nurtures the children of Israel.

Brown's finding of Wisdom symbolism, combined with the leadership roles given to women and Pseudo-Philo's charismatic emphasis, leads her to argue that *LAB* is closely related to Christian texts such as the gospel of John.

Bruce Norman Fisk's recent works⁴¹ ask important questions regarding the use of scriptural quotations in *LAB*. While Jacobson has sought the origin of such quotations, Fisk wonders how they are to be interpreted. Fisk explores whether the context of the original quote is meant to exercise any function in the new placement, in the way that rabbinic interpretations often make use of the portion of a verse that is not cited.

Fisk's reading of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is partial in the sense that he covers only a few examples in depth. But compared to other examinations of how scripture is used and changed in this document, his reading is much more thorough. While he sees that at times Pseudo-Philo chooses to reference scripture without invoking its original context, he is able to argue convincingly that the audience would have heard many of the scriptural allusions as explication of the text. More than any commentator, Fisk seems to appreciate that the theological work at hand is not "exceedingly monotonous" as per James, but exceedingly creative.

While Fisk's work is well reasoned and creative, he barely mentions the treatment of women in this text.

George W. E. Nickelsburg has written several articles about *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, including one that discusses Pseudo-Philo's characterization of leaders.⁴² Reviewing *LAB*'s alteration of biblical material

⁴¹ These include a number of articles as well as his recent book, *Do You Not Remember? Scripture, Story, and Exegesis in the Rewritten Bible of Pseudo-Philo* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001).

⁴² George W. E. Nickelsburg, "Good and Bad Leaders in Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*," *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism: Profiles and Paradigms*, ed. J. J. Collins and G. W. E. Nickelsburg, (SBL, Septuagint and Cognate Studies 12; Chico: Scholars Press, 1980).

and focus on the book of Judges, he argues that the text is preoccupied with the question of appropriate leadership. Nickelsburg develops a profile of Pseudo-Philo's "good leader": one who acts publicly to set a good example, who exhorts Israel to believe that God will not desert them, and who exhibits absolute faith in personal deliverance unless one has sinned, in which case bad fate is deserved and no cause for complaining. Because of the concentration on good leaders and what he sees as military characteristics of leaders, Nickelsburg argues that the most likely setting for the book is the Jewish war.

Nickelsburg notes that Deborah's character has been enhanced by her role as public interpreter of God's will; he also sees that Jael's character has been changed through the addition of prayer and trust in God. He comments on the fact that Jephthah is discredited, while his daughter Seila becomes a public example of faithfulness. But because his desire is to argue for a date of composition, he does not pay much attention to the particular ways that women's stories are reshaped, and he does not seem to notice things like how Hannah's role in the community is much more positive than her husband's role.⁴³

Rhonda Burnette-Bletsch argues that deliverance in *LAB* is not dependent on repentance, merely on God's unconditional covenant. She makes this argument by reading Jael as a heroine in the style of Judith, and arguing that the reversals in the text show God's miraculous power. While I would agree that elements of Judith are incorporated into this story, I will disagree later with her argument that repentance is not required.⁴⁴

Donald Polaski's 1995 article uses rhetorical analysis to examine the portrait of Tamar—and the roles of women in general—in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. I will explore his arguments in Chapter 4 of this study, but in general he focuses on what is suppressed in *LAB* 9. Polaski argues that Amram's arguments are an attempt to suppress the accusation of incest, which is unavoidable in the story of Tamar; and he believes that Tamar is made over into a "passive, pious object

⁴³ As I will argue later, I think his assessment of the situation of the text is correct—the community in a time of great stress and worrying about appropriate leadership—but he has missed a main part of the argument presented. It's not just about good leaders; it's about letting women lead too.

⁴⁴ Rhonda Burnette-Bletsch, "At the Hands of a Woman: Rewriting Jael in Pseudo-Philo," *JSP* 17 (1998) 53–64.

of praise.”⁴⁵ In his assessment, Pseudo-Philo's increased attention to women is not necessarily a positive thing.

The author of this monograph, in a 1997 article entitled “Why Are These Women Here?” examined the question of women's literacy in the first century and the general sociocultural setting of Jewish women as portrayed by *LAB*.⁴⁶ I have argued that the view of this text is a view from the inner room, the women's court, where marriage, babies, nursing, pregnancy, and motherhood are the main concerns. The text's preoccupation with intermarriage reflects the concerns of Jewish women in a world where the attractions of Greek and Roman culture must have been considerable and the possibility of intermarriage—and loss of Jewish identity—would have been high. Since women could exercise less influence in the matters of marriage than men, the cultural mores of their local community would have more effect on their lives.

Erich Gruen has argued that the portrait of God and humans in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is not nearly as cut and dried as most commentators have proposed. He maintains that leading characters not only acknowledge God's ultimate sovereignty but also call God to account on the occasions that they feel he has been forgetful of his promises, remiss in his obligations, or needs to hear another point of view. Even Kenaz, leader par excellence, doubts God's word. Gruen argues that the text lays out a relationship that goes beyond obedience to dialogic relationship.⁴⁷

This brief review leaves one wondering exactly what to think about *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. Not only do commentators disagree on the dating of this document—which is understandable, given that the text does not give many historical clues—but they disagree on just exactly what the text is trying to say. Is that a problem of translation, or of an inconsistent theology by the author, or of what individual scholars choose to read into the text?

I will attempt to address some of these disagreements in my assessment of Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. In particular, I

⁴⁵ Donald Polaski, “On Taming Tamar: Amram's Rhetoric and Women's Roles in Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*,” *JSP* 13 (1995) 79–99.

⁴⁶ Mary Therese DesCamp, “Why Are These Women Here? An Examination of the Sociological Setting of Pseudo-Philo Through Comparative Reading,” *JSP* 16 (1997) 53–80.

⁴⁷ Erich Gruen, “Subversive Elements in Pseudo-Philo,” in M. Mor, et al. *For Uriel: Studies in the History of Israel in Antiquity Presented to Uriel Rappaport* (Zalman Center for Jewish History: Jerusalem, 2005) 37–52.

hope to examine whether repentance is required for God's forgiveness; whether moral leaders are defined by their willingness to risk or their passive acceptance of God's will; whether God's character needs to be protected or wrangled with; and whether Pseudo-Philo is exceedingly monotonous or a gifted storyteller able to marshal a huge range of biblical tropes to make her points. I will also explore—given Pseudo-Philo's argument that intermarriage equates to idolatry and that these are the two greatest sins—what we can learn from this about the community of Pseudo-Philo.

Finally, and more importantly, I hope to examine how women are portrayed in *LAB*, whether that portrayal is positive or negative, and how the reading of women affects the overall reading of this text.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTUAL BLENDING AND METAPHOR THEORY

2.1 METAPHOR

Metaphor has fascinated and bothered philosophers since the ancient Greeks. Aristotle was the first to define metaphor, and three components of his explanation have influenced metaphorical analysis up to the twenty-first century: the argument that metaphor is located at the level of word, rather than larger linguistic unit; his understanding of metaphor as deviant, non-literal word usage; and his belief that metaphor is motivated by pre-existing similarity.¹

Medieval commentators were chary of metaphor, seeing it primarily as a stylistic device. Metaphor may have been necessary in sacred discourse, because speaking of divine truths directly was impossible. But metaphor outside of sacred texts was dangerous. Later empiricist and rationalist philosophies also believed metaphor to be deceptive; literal language was the only satisfactory way to assert truth claims or to speak accurately. For them, metaphor undermined correct reasoning and should be avoided. As John Locke said,

... [I]f we would speak of things as they are, we must allow that... all the artificial and figurative application of words eloquence hath invented, are for nothing else but to insinuate wrong ideas, move the passions, and thereby mislead the judgment; and so indeed are perfect cheats. ... and where truth and knowledge are concerned, cannot but be thought a great fault, either of the language or person that makes use of them.²

Early twentieth century philosophy distinguished between language's "cognitive" and "emotive" purposes; scientific knowledge could be stated literally, and its truth verified independently. In logical positivism, metaphor was emotive and therefore of no use to philosophy. Even after

¹ Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric, Book III (ii)* (Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk: St. Edmundsbury Press Ltd., 1994)

² John Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding, vol. II* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1894), 146–7.

logical positivism lost its ascendancy, linguistic philosophers continued to think of metaphor as a kind of 'parasitic' use of language.³

In 1936, I. A. Richards first made the argument that metaphor was a matter of thought, not just word or language. He also held that language is saturated with metaphor, and that communication without metaphor is impossible. Richard's work was largely ignored until Max Black argued that metaphors could not necessarily be reduced to literal correspondence, and that the perceived similarities between metaphorical parts might be the product rather than the cause of metaphorical association.⁴

An explosion of research followed Max Black's assertions. However, the real turning point in contemporary metaphor research occurred in 1977, at a multi-disciplinary conference on metaphor when Michael Reddy presented a paper analyzing the metaphors that humans use to speak about language and information exchange.⁵ This analysis served as the launching pad for a generation of linguistic theorists, philosophers, and cognitive scientists, led by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in their landmark book, *Metaphors We Live By*. These researchers laid the foundation for modern claims that metaphor is a matter of thinking, not just language, and that metaphor is imbedded in everyday thinking and speech.

Contemporary metaphor theory, as elucidated by Lakoff, Johnson, Turner, Sweetser, and Grady,⁶ holds that metaphorical capacity springs from embodied cognition; humans perceive the world through the senses in combination with cognitive capacities.

³ Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphors and Religious Language*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985) 67.

⁴ Max Black, "Metaphor," 1955, reprinted in *Philosophical Perspectives on Metaphor* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981) 63–82.

⁵ Michael Reddy, "The conduit metaphor: a case of frame conflict in our language about language", in *Metaphor and Thought, Second Edition*, ed. Andrew Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 164–201.

⁶ See, for instance, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Johnson, *Philosophical Perspectives on Metaphor* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981); Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal about the Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Mark Turner, *Death is the Mother of Beauty: Mind, Metaphor, Criticism*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), Lakoff and Turner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), Eve E. Sweetser, *From Etymology to Pragmatics: The Mind-As-Body Metaphor in Semantic Structure and Semantic Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Joseph Grady, "Foundations of Meaning: Primary Metaphors and Primary Scenes," Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 1997.

Contemporary cognitive linguistics argues **that metaphor is a matter of thinking, not a matter of language**: human beings use metaphors to conceptualize one mental domain in terms of another. Metaphor imposes structure on thinking, and allows one to **reason about**, not just talk about, one thing in terms of another. Metaphorical concepts are not limited to poetic flights of fancy but are central and essential to our mundane everyday thinking.⁷ Human beings need metaphor both to reason and to speak about time, causation, states, and other common abstract concepts.⁸ Readers are invited, if they doubt the pervasiveness of metaphor in everyday language, to try talking about time in any extended way without mentioning words related to distance, front-back directionality, or other physical spatial reference.

In contemporary metaphor research, the input which provides the framework or structure for the metaphor is referred to as the source domain, and the input which is being examined is the target domain. For instance, in the metaphor KNOWING IS SEEING, the source is seeing and the target is knowing. When using this metaphor, we speak about knowledge in the language of sight: *I see what she's saying*.

2.1.1 *Embodiment and Primary Metaphor*

Metaphorical capacity springs from embodied cognition; human beings perceive the world through senses in combination with cognitive capacities. Contemporary theory holds that at the most basic level one uses **primary** metaphors, which are grounded in primary scenes, “recurrent, basic event-types which involve a tight correlation between perceptual experience and subjective response.”⁹

While infants or young children, all humans appear to learn primary metaphors—such as the relationship of vision and knowledge—that are grounded in primary scenes. Most infants experience salient and persistent co-activation of these two neural domains, since visual input is one of the most important sources of information on which human knowledge is based. Repeated co-activation results in permanent neural

⁷ This does not mean that every metaphorical statement is mundane; merely that at the most basic level, human use of metaphor is unconscious, unsophisticated, and regular.

⁸ George Lakoff, “The contemporary theory of metaphor,” in *Metaphor and Thought*, (2nd ed.), ed. Andrew Ortonoy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 212.

⁹ Grady, “Foundations”, 2.

connections between portions of the brain dedicated to these different experiences.¹⁰

This relationship motivates the common metaphor, KNOWING IS SEEING.¹¹ Research on child language has shown that prior to the use of this metaphor, children conflate the two domains; the earliest uses of vision verbs refer not just to physical vision, nor just to cognition, but to visual experience as a source of new mental input.¹² *See the duck-ies!* or *Let's see what is in this box* are common examples of early uses both to and by young English-speaking children. In these instances, knowledge actually co-occurs with and depends on vision. As the child grows and develops more complex understanding of both vision and knowledge, the two domains develop more complex and separable mental representations.

Differentiation between the domains of seeing and knowing does not, however, remove the neural links between them. The neural connection motivates a metaphorical mapping between the source domain of vision and the target domain of knowledge, as exemplified by uses such as *I see what you mean*. In this example, knowledge does not depend upon actual sight but upon "insight." Neural links formed during co-activation of the primary metaphor remain available so that later one may speak of knowledge metaphorically in the language of sight.

It is common for the source domains of primary metaphors to be perceptual experience, and for the target domains to be some area of subjective response (e.g., KNOWING IS SEEING, ACQUIESCENCE IS SWALLOWING). For primary metaphors (though not necessarily all metaphors), target domains have less sensory content than source domains; but they are not necessarily abstract and difficult concepts. Rather, target domains are essential parts of everyday human experience. As Grady argues, primary metaphors "...map not from lower-level to higher-level concepts, but between very fundamental concepts of different sorts...

¹⁰ George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh*, (New York: Basic Books, 1999) 46; after S. Narayanan, "Embodiment in Language Understanding: Sensory-Motor Representations for Metaphoric Reasoning About Event Descriptions," (Ph.D. dissertation, UC-Berkeley, 1997).

¹¹ In cognitive metaphor research, the standardized notation for a cognitive metaphor is "TARGET DOMAIN IS SOURCE DOMAIN". This convention will be used throughout this monograph.

¹² Christopher Johnson, "Learnability in the acquisition of multiple senses: SOURCE reconsidered," *Proceedings of the 22nd Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society* (Berkeley CA: Berkeley Linguistics Society, 1996).

[Primary m]etaphors link the basic “backstage” operations of cognition with the kind of sensory images (in any modality) that we are most able to maintain and manipulate in our consciousness. In this sense, primary metaphors may be responsible for much of the substance of subjective mental experience.”¹³

Every metaphor is not a primary metaphor; i.e., not every metaphor is neurologically established at an early age through repeated perception and subjective response. Many metaphors are transient cognitive constructions, while still others are thoroughly embedded in a given culture: the metaphor GOD IS FATHER, for instance. These will be referred to as “culturally primary metaphor” or, when the metaphor carries significant accompanying structure, as “cultural frame,” because while repeated use may have resulted in significant neural connections, these connections are not necessarily the result of childhood experience but are the consequence of repeated activation in cultural context.

Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum, the text under consideration in this study, is—like every linguistic construction—replete with such primary metaphors as KNOWING IS SEEING and IMPURITY IS PHYSICAL CORRUPTION. Pseudo-Philo also abounds with culturally entrenched primary metaphors such as GOD IS A SHEPHERD and ISRAEL IS SHEEP. While these metaphors for God and the divine-human relationship may not be physiologically instantiated as early in life as a primary metaphor, they are so culturally rooted that they function as if they were literal truth for the culture in question.¹⁴

2.1.2 *Cross-linguistic Evidence*

Sweetser’s and Grady’s research argues for cross-linguistic metaphorical similarity, holding that cross-cultural correspondences are not arbitrary, but rooted in biology and human experience.¹⁵ Sweetser’s work uncovers a widespread pattern in Indo-European languages where a word like “perspicacious,” which originally signified vision, has lost its

¹³ Grady, *Foundations*, 135–6.

¹⁴ This level of stability for a cognitive blend is not necessarily uncommon. One need only look at such concepts as names for distant relatives that require multiple blends; human language and culture have standardized these into handy cognitive packets, such as “my great-great-grandmother”. These are remarkably stable cultural blends.

¹⁵ As mentioned earlier, cognitive science theorizes that recurrent simultaneous activation of parts of the brain devoted to different experiences can establish permanent neural links between those parts of the brain, whether those activations come from primary metaphors or from culturally primary metaphors and cultural frames.

original sense and now denotes a mental rather than visual event.¹⁶ Grady argues that “people in speech communities widely separated by time and geography all associate words from one particular semantic field (relating to physical weight) with meaning from another (relating to personal, emotional experience).”¹⁷ These patterns of association between language and conceptual structure at the primary level may well be universal.

Metaphor theory argues that these primary metaphors born of the relationship between perceptual experience and subjective response are building blocks for cognition. Primary metaphors are the material of more complex metaphors with which humans conceptualize the world.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL BLENDING¹⁸

While research has progressed on metaphor, others in the cognitive sciences have begun to look at conceptual blending as the overarching framework for human thinking. Blending theorists hypothesize that conceptual blending—understood as the ongoing, instantaneous process of thinking that recruits and combines meaning from well-established cognitive structures—is the way that humans make new meaning.

Grady, Oakley and Coulson, in a 1999 paper, reflected the general stance of metaphor researchers toward investigation in conceptual blending when they argued that metaphor was a subset of the broader category of conceptual blending. The difference, as they understood it, between a metaphor and a blend was that a metaphor represented a more stable cognitive structure than a blend, and the mapping in a metaphor moved only from source to target.¹⁹ Cognitive blends, they argued, were “on-line” and emergent rather than stable; they involved multiple mental spaces rather than just the target and source mental

¹⁶ Sweetser, *Etymology*, Chapter 2.

¹⁷ Grady, *Foundations*, 2. Grady samples ancient Greek, Japanese, Russian, Swahili, Arabic, and medieval Irish to establish that these speech communities all share the association between physical weight and emotional experience, regardless of differences in geography and era.

¹⁸ Hereafter also referred to as conceptual integration or blending theory.

¹⁹ That is, there is temporary suppression of certain salient features of the target input by the source input when the two are blended. This differs from conceptual blending, where features of either input may be active in the blend. See below, double scope blends.

spaces; and inferences from both the source and the target both became part of the meaning.²⁰

Sweetser, Fauconnier and Turner also see metaphor as a subset of the broader category of conceptual blending. But for them, it is not metaphor's stability per se which differentiates it from other cognitive blends. Language and culture are rife with non-metaphorical blends that exhibit remarkable stability (as well as those that are fleeting). For them, the difference has to do with the way that the inputs, or domains, interact in the cognitive blend.

In their 2002 book *The Way We Think*, Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner situate metaphor within an expanded understanding of conceptual blending. In conceptual blending, Fauconnier and Turner hypothesize that the processing of cognitive material by the brain takes place instantaneously and unconsciously. This conceptual blending is an active and virtually invisible cognitive process that occurs even as one thinks, and it is capable of performing new conceptual work on structures that have been previously entrenched. Blends can range from simple frames—the concept “mother”—to conventional formations—the metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY—to wildly original combinations—dogs singing Christmas carols. The purpose of such blending is to compress complex ideas to a scale at which they can be easily manipulated by human minds. The compressions give one the sense of global insight.

Fauconnier and Turner have developed a basic diagram to demonstrate conceptual blending and its essential characteristics. We can examine this diagram using a conceptual blend found in Pseudo-Philo: *Elumah is the daughter-in-law of Edoc and mother of Samson*.²¹

In the basic diagram, there are four circles, each representing a mental space: the generic mental space, the mental space of each input, and the blended mental space.²²

The generic mental space represents what two inputs have in common; solid lines show the connections between the generic space and

²⁰ Joseph Grady, Todd Oakley and Seana Coulson, “Blending and Metaphor”, *Metaphor in Cognitive Linguistics: Selected Papers from the Fifth International Cognitive Linguistics Conference*, eds. Raymond Gibbs and Gerard Steen, (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 1999) 101–124.

²¹ Pseudo-Philo traces her husband Manoah's lineage back seven generations, so this could be much more complex.

²² A more complex integration network may require additional input spaces and even multiple blended spaces.

the inputs, and between the inputs and blended space. Matching and cross-space mapping between the two input spaces is shown with dotted lines. These dotted lines correspond to neural co-activations or bindings, like those discussed above in primary metaphor.

In the basic diagram, the generic space is at the top of an imaginary diamond, the input spaces below it to the right and the left, and the blended space at the bottom.

As one can see from the illustration below, the generic space is extremely nonspecific. With just the three elements of man, woman and man, there are innumerable possible blends, even when one of the inputs is the frame for family: husband and wife and son, brother and sister and nephew, father and daughter and husband, etc.

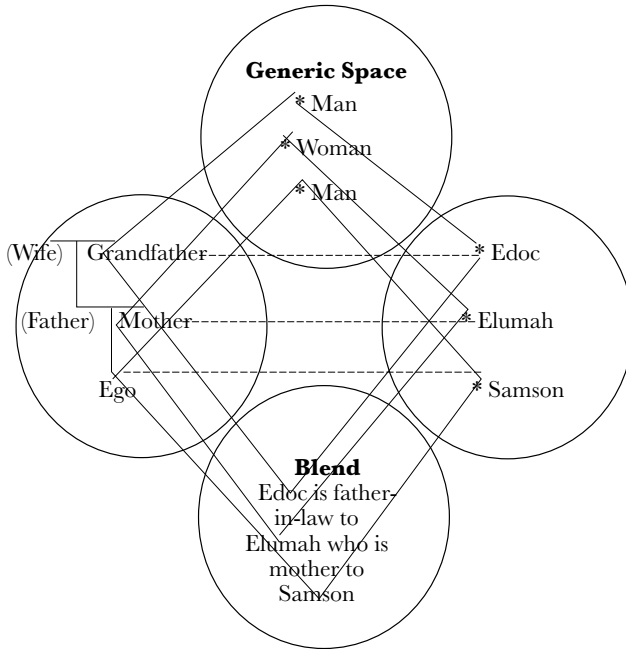
The inputs represent two different mental spaces, or “sets of activated neuronal assemblies.”²³ In this case, one of the inputs is a frame for family, containing different roles. The other input is a collection of elements, or values, for those roles. In more complex blends, both input spaces could both contain either complete or partial cognitive frames. These frames could be identical or clashing; they could be projected in part, in whole, or not at all into the blended space.

The blended space is the emergent structure. It contains material that is not available in the separate inputs: in this case, the information that there is a particular father-in-law—daughter-in-law structure named Edoc-Elumah, and a mother-son structure named Elumah-Samson. It composes and completes the material from the inputs. This makes new structure and relationships available to the blend: hence, though we have only been given the name of the father-in-law, mother and son, the “family” input tells us that there is also an element with the role son/husband/father. Other relationships, like wife of Edoc, mother and father of Elumah, wife of Samson, etc. are also implied and could be elaborated. We could even elaborate a discussion where Elumah and Edoc discuss Samson’s choice of wife or whether divorce is appropriate when a couple is childless.

There is always selected projection from the inputs to the blended space. In this particular blend, we do not project the role “father” into the blend from the family frame input. Nor do we project Samson’s first Philistine wife or Delilah.

²³ Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and The Mind’s Hidden Complexities* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 40.

While this particular diagram may seem simplistic and obvious, it represents an enormously flexible standard mapping for conceptual blending.²⁴ This kind of mental construction is responsible for our ability to identify sameness and difference, to integrate ideas, and to employ imagination. Using this basic analysis, we have the tools to analyze counterfactual thought and complex metaphor as well as other grammatical forms that have resisted linguistic analysis.



Family Relationships

The brain uses conceptual blending in order to compress complex ideas to human scale and make them accessible. Blending enables humans to manipulate and to learn complicated concepts easily. Such processing involves linkages and compressions: linkages between concepts that correspond in some way, such as time, role, or identity; and compres-

²⁴ Often, a pithy blending map can cause the writer to say, "Well, duh!" When something feels absolutely obvious, it is an indicator that the cognitive blend has been appropriately analyzed. Doctoral students struggling to analyze biblical texts with modern cognitive methods recognize this as the "Well, duh!" test, pioneered by Bonnie Howe.

sions as when diffuse items are compressed into a single framework. For instance, “Elijah” is a value for “Ancient Hebrew Prophet”—they are linked through the vital relation “role.” And when one says, *The prophet always wants the people to observe the law*, we are compressing numerous individual prophets into a single person who has guided the people for centuries.

Conceptual blending, like metaphor, is both a physiological action—taking place at the neural level of the brain—and a cultural action—as culturally approved/accepted/substantiated blends are appropriated into the cultural fabric. Whether one uses the language of conceptual blend or metaphor theory, the phenomenon under study is not confined to language use but is rather a matter of thinking. Human beings use blends and metaphors in order to conceive of one mental domain in terms of another. This allows one to reason about one input in the language and frame of the other input: and like primary metaphors, culturally entrenched blends may form permanent neural pathways in the brain.

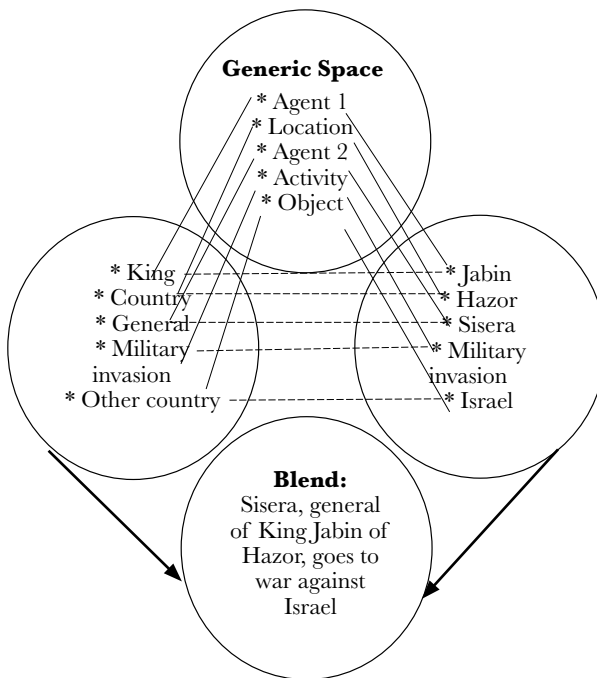
2.2.1 *Types of Blends: Simplex Networks*

Conceptual blends range widely in their creativity and stability. On one end are **simplex networks**, the most stable. In a simplex network, the elements from one input (such as the names George and Leslie) are projected as values of another input that contains a frame with its projected roles (father, daughter). Frames are provided by human culture and biology: these organizing frames delineate a mental space where a particular activity with its members and procedures occurs. An organizing frame could be the biological frame of family, with roles for a father, mother, daughter or son and so on; or the frame of a simple commercial transaction with roles for a buyer and a seller and the item being sold; or the frame of an ancient military offensive, with king, general, army, weapons, and so on.²⁵ Biological frames are naturally

²⁵ Obviously, any of these frames could be much more complex. For instance, the commercial exchange frame could include the person who actually manufactured the item, the owner of the item if different from the seller, how and by whom it was packaged, the currency used for payment, the situation in which the transaction occurred (grocery store, floor of the stock exchange, farmer’s market, barter), to whom the payment was given, and so on. The ancient military offensive could include weapons, booty, numbers fighting, numbers killed, territory gained, disposition of major players, battlefield, allies, etc.

occurring—the growth of a seed into a plant, for instance—while cultural frames are specific to time and place. Obviously, there can be interaction between the two kinds of frames, as when a culture combines the biological realities of family relatedness with cultural interpretation: compare, for instance, a 21st century American understanding of family with a 1st century Middle Eastern definition.²⁶ In a simplex blend, each element in one input corresponds to a role in the frame of the other input. When the two are blended, the structure from one input is integrated with the constituent values of the other input to present an incorporated whole.

Conventional mapping for a simplex blend for King Jabin of Hazor and his general would look like this:



Simple Network: Sisera

²⁶ While both incorporate persons who are biologically related, most 21st century American families include only two—and sometimes only a single—generation in a household, as opposed to a 1st century family in Judea which could include mother or mother-in-law, father or father-in-law, siblings and their spouses, children, nieces and nephews, and other relatives such as aunts and uncles under a single roof.

In a simplex network, there is no conflict between inputs. We have only one frame, that of an ancient military offensive, and the frame contains roles for a king, kingdom, general, and the subject of a military action. There is only one set of elements—in this case, Jabin, Hazor, Sisera, Israel. These elements provide values for the roles in the frame provided by the other input. The two inputs are congruent, and they are cognitively compressed in order to establish the blend. The abstract concepts about ancient military offensives and the values Jabin, Hazor, Sisera, and Israel are compressed into the blend: Sisera, general of the army of King Jabin of Hazor, went to war against Israel.

2.2.2 *Types of Blends: Mirror Networks*

Slightly more dynamic than simplex blends are **mirror networks**, where both inputs as well as the generic and blended space share the same organizing frame. An example of a mirror network would be a graph showing the times of all winners of the Big Sur marathon during the last ten years. While there may be clashes at levels more specific than the frame—weather conditions, date, opponents—the blend will resolve these clashes by linking and compressing them.

In Pseudo-Philo we find mirror networks when we compare certain repeated occurrences. One such instance of a mirror network occurs in the speech of Seila, where she invokes the Aqedah to instruct her father on his behavior. At 40:2, she says,

Et quis est qui tristetur moriens, videns populum liberatum? Aut immemor es que facta sunt in diebus patrum nostrorum, quando pater filium inponebat in holocaustum, et non contradixit ei sed epulans consensit illi, et erat qui offerebatur paratus, et qui offerebat gaudens?

Who is there who would be sad to die, seeing the people freed? Or have you forgotten what happened in the days of our fathers when the father placed the son as a burnt offering, and he did not dispute him but gladly gave consent to him, and the one being offered was ready and the one who was offering was rejoicing?²⁷

In this speech, Seila compares herself to Isaac, and her father to Abraham. If we consider that comparison the blended space, then the story of Isaac is one of the inputs, the story of Seila is another, and the generic space shares an organizing framework with these other mental spaces

²⁷ All English translations of *LAB* are from Jacobson unless otherwise noted.

of “Father sacrifices only begotten child to Yahweh.” The relevant activity would be presentation of a holocaust, sacrificed to Yahweh, for the good of the people,²⁸ where the victim is the only child of an Israelite leader, and the one sacrificing is his or her father.

In this mirror network, we have a number of clashes below the level of the organizing frame. The conflict which Pseudo-Philo highlights in this speech, and which we consider in the blend, is the contrast between Abraham’s rejoicing and Jephthah’s misery.

Other differences also occur, though they are not the subject of *LAB*’s discussion. The most obvious divergence is that Seila died while Isaac did not.²⁹ Another clash is difference in gender between Isaac and Seila. Yet another contrast is that Seila’s death comes as a result of her father’s vow to assure military victory, while Isaac’s near death is either motivated by the angels’ jealousy (as per Pseudo-Philo) or God’s desire to test Abraham (Genesis 22). While these are all interesting variations, they are not Pseudo-Philo’s focus and their presence does not keep the reader from making the intended connections between Seila and Isaac.

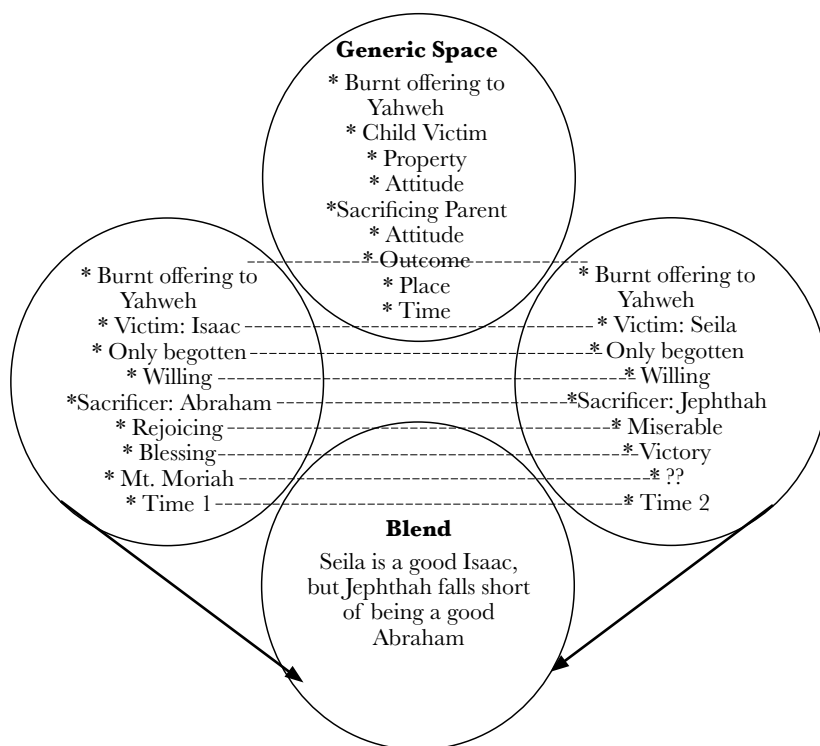
A mirror network will also feature compression between the two inputs. Because there are no clashes of framework, it is very easy to find the elements which should be compressed. In this blend, we find compression of Identity (Seila-Isaac, Jephthah-Abraham), Role (Child Victim, Sacrificing Parent), Property (Only-begotten), Attitude (Willing/Willing, Rejoicing-Miserable), Time (Time 1–Time 2), Space (Mount Moriah, somewhere in Israel), and Outcome (Blessing-Victory).

The actual mapping for this mirror network would look like the following.³⁰

²⁸ This is a matter of contention among scholars. See the discussion of Categories below.

²⁹ At least in the biblical version. Later re-tellings of the Isaac story sometimes imply or state outright that he was actually sacrificed.

³⁰ I have omitted the lines connecting the generic space with the input spaces, and the input spaces with the blend, in order to make the diagram easier to read. The connections, however, should be understood to be present. These lines will be omitted in all subsequent diagrams unless needed to illustrate a particularly tricky connection.



Mirror Network: Pseudo-Philo's Abraham/Isaac and Jephthah/Seila

In this blend provided by Pseudo-Philo, one must remember that the Isaac input is Pseudo-Philo's Isaac, not the biblical Isaac. If we were using the biblical Isaac, Seila would be a better victim than he!³¹

In the blend, we are given the tools to consider the situation and Jephthah's attitude. Seila is a great Isaac, a willing only-begotten victim, but Jephthah is a pretty lousy Abraham. According to Pseudo-Philo, the burnt offering must be willing and the sacrificer must rejoice. If not,

³¹ It is clear that Pseudo-Philo's portrait of Isaac has been previously blended with some other input, since the Genesis 22 passage has no mention of willingness on Isaac's part, and the biblical blessing to Israel results from Abraham's actions rather than Isaac's. Two likely candidates for that input are the biblical portrait of Seila and the post-Maccabean value of self-sacrifice (as Isaac's willingness is found in stories unrelated to Seila). Parsing out which of these is at work here is impossible, of course. I thank Antoinette Wire for pointing out that the Maccabean episodes and the writings about them would surely serve as mental backdrop for Pseudo-Philo. For more on Seila and Isaac, see the discussion of Categories below.

then the sacrifice will not be acceptable to God and the child has lost his or her life in vain. Seila is encouraging her father to buck up and follow Abraham's lead lest her death be an empty gesture.

Mirror networks are particularly important for the analysis of categories, which will be discussed in greater detail in the last section of this chapter.

2.2.3 *Types of Blends: Single Scope Blends*

Single and double scope blends represent levels of increasingly complex cognitive work. A **single scope blend** involves two input spaces with different organizing frames, where the inferential transfer to the blend comes exclusively from one of the inputs. The generic space is relatively unstructured, and the blended space, while containing only one organizing frame, will inherit elements from both inputs.

Blending theorists categorize primary or conventional (culturally primary) metaphors as single scope blends.³² A metaphor, or single scope blend, involves a *systematic* pattern of mapping between the first input (*source domain*), which provides language and images (the structure or frame), and the second input (*target domain*), which is the actual concept being considered. The relationships that hold in the source carry over into the blend produced; the language of the source becomes the language of the blend; the structure of the source becomes the structure of the blend.

Chapter 30 offers an excellent example of a single scope blend, in Deborah's inaugural speech to the people.

Et precepit vobis Moyses et Ihesus et Cenez et Zebul, et non obaudistis eos. Nam viventibus illis ostendistis vos sicut servientes Deo vestro, mortuis autem his, mortuum est etiam et cor vestrum, et facti estis similes ferro misso in ignem, quod conflatum per flammam fiet tamquam aqua, et cum exierit de igne revertitur in duritiam suam. Sic et vos, dum vos urunt qui vos monent, demonstratum facitis,³³ et postquam defuncti fuerint obliviscimini omnium. (30:6)

³² Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*, 126.

³³ Instead of *demonstratis factum*; following amendment by Jacobson, 839.

And he instructed you by Moses and Joshua and Kenaz and Zebul and you did not obey them. For while they were living you presented yourselves like servants to your God; however when these ones died, died also your heart and you became like iron which has been sent into fire, which when burned in the fire, will become like water but³⁴ when it has come out of the fire it reverts to its hardness. Thus also you, while they who warn you burn you, what you were taught you do, but after they were finished, you forget everything.

In this example, the source domain is the mineral iron and the target is Israel (ISRAEL IS IRON). One can speak of Israel as hard, soft, cold, hot, malleable, or brittle. *The people have reverted to their hardness* is a conventional illustration of how one reasons about the target in source domain language. This preservation of source relationships in the resulting blend also holds in more novel applications, and in more complex metaphors. The statement, *Israel's nothing but pig iron* would still be understood in terms of the source domain concepts of iron.³⁵

The consistent mapping from source, which provides the language and images for the blend, to the target, which is the actual concept being considered, is referred to as **systematicity**. The relationships which hold in the source domain carry over into the new cognitive blend; the language of the source is used as the language of the target when the blend is made; and the structure of the source is used to structure the target in the blend.

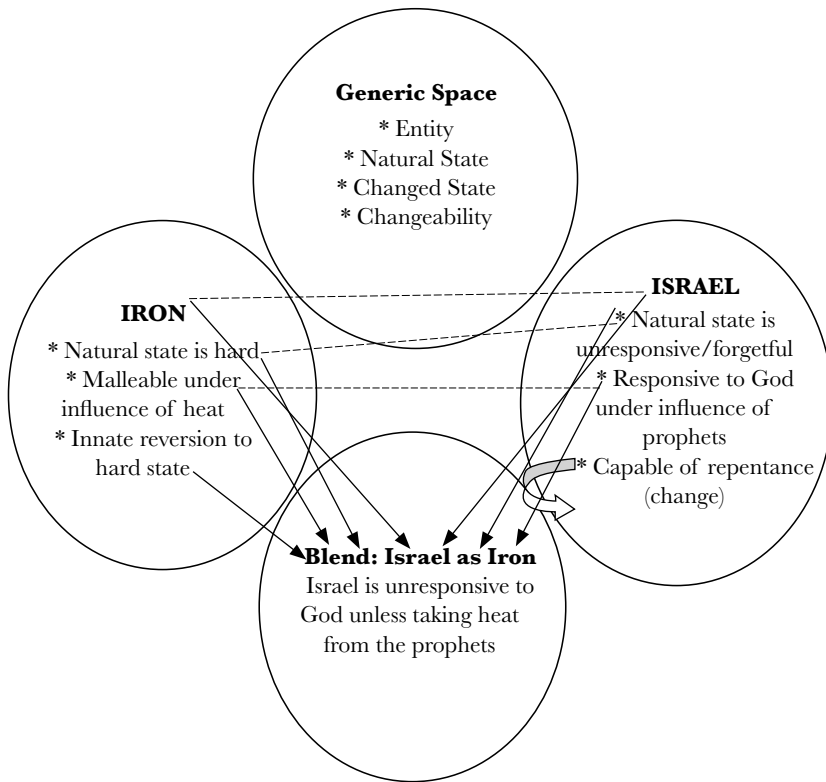
In the single scope blend mapped below, the people of Israel are compared to iron.³⁶ The mutability and immutability of iron is equated to the obedience of the people. The central metaphor is ISRAEL IS IRON.³⁷

³⁴ The conjunction “et” translates Hebrew “waw” which can have either conjunctive or disjunctive meaning.

³⁵ George Lakoff, in “Contemporary theory of metaphor”, 215–6, has argued that the preservation of source relationships has a corollary, in that the image-schema structure of a target domain must also maintain its integrity. Hence, Lakoff believes that the mapping possibilities between source and target in metaphor are limited by the structure of both domains.

³⁶ Only once in the Hebrew scriptures is a similar comparison made, in Isaiah 48:4 where God says, “I know you are obstinate, and your neck is an iron sinew...”

³⁷ Sub-metaphors resulting from this blend would include BEING RESPONSIVE TO GOD IS BEING HOT/SOFT; BEING UNRESPONSIVE TO GOD IS BEING COLD/HARD; FORGETTING GOD IS HEAT LOSS AND HARDENING. In this diagram, I've shown the arrows whereby the inputs move into the blend in order to highlight that one input—that of the capacity for repentance—does not get transferred to the blend. Hence the arrow curving back out of the blended space.



Single Scope Blend (Metaphor): Israel is Iron

In this analysis, the structure of the source—the relationship between the element iron and heat—is mapped into the blend. Israel is compressed with the iron through the vital relation of identity. Likewise, the prophets are compressed with the ironworker who applies heat. Israel's lack of responsiveness to God is mapped onto the hardness of iron through the property of similarity.

The innate reversion of iron to its hard state is mapped into the blended space, where it engenders the implication that the people of Israel are incapable of being responsive to, or remembering God without compulsion. Hence, sinfulness/non-responsiveness to God becomes a matter of Israel's nature or essence, rather than a choice. Based on this metaphor, one could ask whether Israel is capable of good, since it seems incapable of volition. The implication is that the very essence of the community is evil, or at least slothful.

Suppression is the name given to the observation that while the structure of the source systematically highlights features in the target, by definition other target features will be suppressed. In the metaphorical statement above, readers know that Israel, as a group of human beings with will and ability, actually has the capacity to change and respond without the exertion of an outside force. Israel can exhibit volition. But in this example, knowledge of the target domain (Israel) is suppressed and over-ridden by the source domain structure (iron).

Directionality is the observation that the relationship between the source and target domains is not symmetrical. Inferences are transferred in one direction only, from the source to the target. In the previous example, the language of metal-working is used to describe Israel, the community. But the language of Israel is not understood to describe metal-working: *That horseshoe really needs to remember the commandments* does not mean that a piece of iron should be heated for shaping.³⁸ Though there are some metaphors where the source and target are interchangeable (GOD IS FATHER, FATHER IS GOD), they represent two different metaphors, not a single metaphor which transfers inferences in both directions. Different inferences are mapped in the metaphorical concept GOD IS FATHER (e.g., *God provides us with food and shelter*) than in FATHER IS GOD (e.g., *He thinks he is all powerful*).

Because metaphors and other cognitive blends impose structure on our thinking and pick out salient features of a concept, allowing one to construct a blend where one reasons about the *target* in the language and concepts of the *source*, this does NOT imply that similarities are already present in our conceptual representations, and that the source domain merely allows one to pick them out.³⁹ Blending takes place because the creative human mind can find some relationship, structure, or attribute shared by source or target, not because the salient characteristic of the target is actually similar to a perceived salient characteristic of the source. Whether the composition works as a satisfying metaphor depends the richness of the domains and the thinker's creativity, not pre-existing similarity between the two domains. For instance, one can compress two people, as when one says, *She's a real Hitler* about a harsh instructor. This metaphor may highlight the target's malignant behavior,

³⁸ See Lakoff and Turner, *More Than Cool Reason*, 131–33.

³⁹ Turner, *Death is the Mother of Beauty*, 19.

but any actual identity between the individuals is purely fiction, the result of creative thinking.⁴⁰

The more one feels that a single input's inferential structure dominates in the final blend, the more a given cognitive construction will feel like a metaphor, or single scope blend. But at times, one feels that a metaphor is somehow off, or quirky: *I'm going to uproot that nest of vipers who mock my scholarship*. The statement may not exhibit the systematicity, suppression, or directionality described above, or maybe two unrelated culturally primary metaphors are being used in concert: in either case, the resulting blend will contain framework from more than one input. This kind of structure, which is extremely common, should be analyzed as a double, rather than single, scope blend because both inputs are being activated for the final cognitive construction.

2.2.4 *Types of Blends: Double Scope Blends*

Double scope blends, like single scope blends, involve inputs (e.g., context, conventional metaphor, etc.) with different organizing frames. The meanings from the inputs are projected into a separate mental space where they are blended together. Unlike metaphor, where the structure or frame of the blend comes from a single input (the source domain), in double scope cognitive blends, meaning is constructed from two or more input spaces. The resulting cognitive structure of the blend is not dictated by the source (as in metaphor) nor is it a consequence of the target, but rather the structure develops from the blended space, through elaboration, inference, and completion. The blend will have structure of its own, sometimes wildly original. *My ear is open like a greedy shark to catch the tunings of a voice divine* blends a ravenous shark with the

⁴⁰ Joseph Grady, in "A Typology of Motivation for Conceptual Metaphor" in *Metaphor in Cognitive Linguistics: Selected Papers from the Fifth International Cognitive Linguistics Conference*, eds. Raymond Gibbs and Gerard Steen, (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 1999), 92, argues that there is more than one kind of metaphor, and that some metaphors involve correspondences between concepts of the same type. (He uses the GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor to show how the metaphor, "Achilles is a lion", is motivated by a perceived resemblance, with both "courageous person" and "lion" mapping as specific examples of "courageous being." But even in what Grady calls "resemblance metaphors", certain features are selected for comparison while others are ignored (the color of the lion and its tendency to sleep all day are both suppressed). Hence the assumption of similarity is only similarity of a certain highlighted part which has been brought to conscious consideration.

ear's capacity for hearing: the open ear maps onto the shark's open jaws in a startling image.⁴¹

LAB 28 gives a nice example of a double scope blend where both inputs leak into the blended space. At 28:4, Phinehas relates a vision received by his father Eleazar, which Eleazar later told to Phinehas. In the vision, God speaks to Eleazar about his plan for Israel.

Et plantabo vineam grandem, et de ea eligam plantationem, et disponam eam, et nominabo eam nomine meo, et erit mea semper. Cum ego fecerim omnia que dixi, tamen plantatio mea, que a me nominata est, non agnoscet me plantatorem suum, sed corrumpet fructum suum, et non reportabit mihi fructum eius.

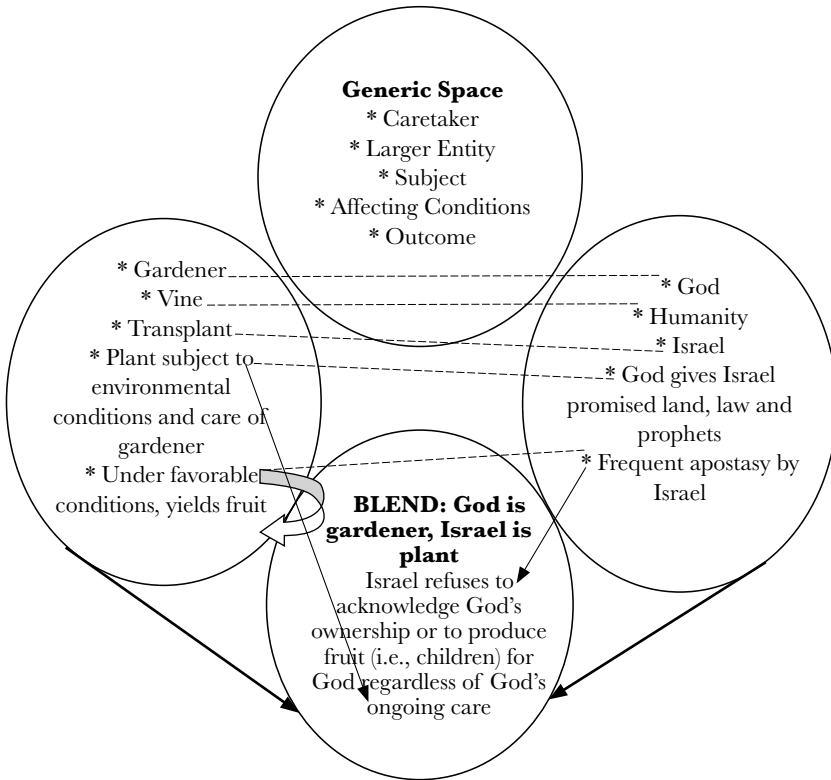
And I will plant a great vine, and from it I will choose a plant and I will transplant it, and I will name it by my name, and it will be mine forever. Although I have done everything which I said, nevertheless my plant, which by my name was called, will not know me, its planter, but will destroy its fruit and will not yield to me its fruit. (28:4)

This double scope blend is an extended metaphor for the relationship between God and Israel. In the first input, from the domain of plant care, there is an initial vine planted by the gardener, from which is selected a smaller plant, that is transplanted. This smaller plant is tended by the gardener but without success. The plant yields little fruit, and that fruit which it does yield is unfit for consumption. In the world of plant care, such a miserable yield is due to a harsh environmental situation (drought, flood, extreme heat or cold), genetic inadequacy, and/or poor care from the gardener.

The other input space is the people Israel as viewed by Pseudo-Philo, with their status among the nations as God's own people who were given the promised land, the law, and the prophets, but committed repeated apostasy.

In this blend, while the majority of the structure comes from the input about plant care, there is one important over-ride. Plants, by nature, have no volition, and no power except to grow. They are subject to human powers—transplanting, pruning, watering, fertilizing—and the environment—heat, drought, etc. If well cared for, and of healthy and productive stock, a plant produces healthy and bountiful fruit. Plants do not choose this response; it is simply the natural outcome of appropriate care.

⁴¹ My thanks to the incomparable Dorothy Sayers, who parades this outrageous construction by Keats in *Gaudy Night* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), 284.



Double Scope Blend, Israel as Vine: Input from Target Can Over-ride Source

But the blend incorporates volition and choice, two elements that are the natural behaviors of human beings, not plants. In this blended space, the plant in question behaves in a most unplantlike way. It “refuses” to yield its fruit; it destroys or spoils its produce rather than give it to the cultivator. It does not “know” its planter: i.e., it does not acknowledge either its ownership by or the relationship with the gardener.

This double scope cognitive blend incorporates material from both inputs, and the material that it integrates tells us something about the underlying beliefs of Pseudo-Philo. Israel’s propensity to sin—to resist relationship with God, to refuse to raise children in the law—is accentuated. This particular theme will be found repeatedly throughout the text of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*: we’ve just shown it twice!

2.3 COUNTERFACTUALS

My Latin grammar describes a contrafactual condition as a condition which is not true.⁴² As Fauconnier and Turner point out, such a definition leads us to believe that when we think about reality, we do not use counterfactual thinking. But counterfactuality is necessary to considering reality.⁴³ Human beings cannot reason without the ability to consider both the real and the unreal. If I want to go to a movie this evening, I have to be able to imagine a number of different scenarios—leaving the dog alone in the house or sending the dog off with my husband when he teaches a class, making a trip to the bank or borrowing money from the grocery jar, going to a 7 p.m. showing or waiting until 9 p.m., seeing a documentary about Cher versus a Jackie Chan action flick, and so on. All of these scenarios take place in my mind before I move a muscle, and they all involve my capacity to reason about the unreal—to construct cognitive spaces in which I “try out” incompatible scenarios, and choose between the imagined outcomes.

Fauconnier and Turner analyze counterfactuality as a form of blending whereby two or more incompatible mental spaces are compared.⁴⁴ Obvious counterfactual speech takes the form of “If Y, then X”, but much of every day language and reasoning contains hidden counterfactual blends. Counterfactuality is not just a linguistic phenomenon but it is also built into cultures through custom, mores, etc.

Cognitively, a counterfactual mental construction is just like other cognitive blends, in that it contains generic space, input spaces, and blends. Counterfactual alternatives will not represent full pictures of the world, but will be schematized, and share many common elements.⁴⁵

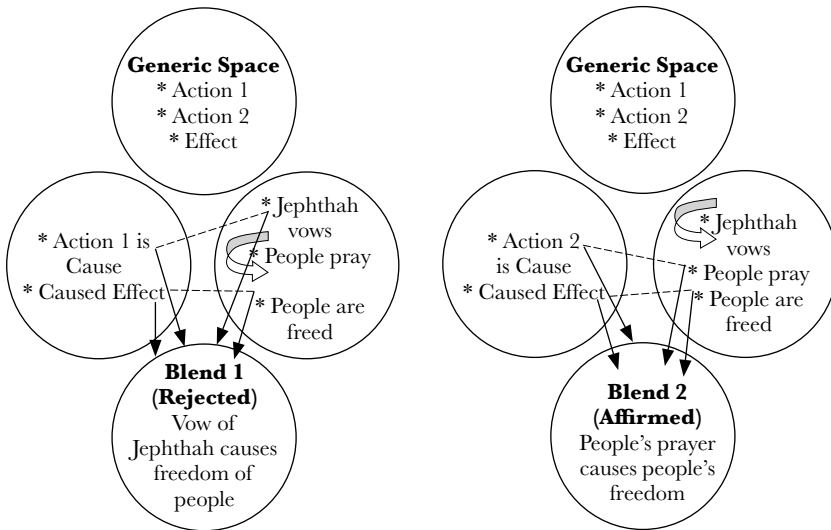
When God states at 39:11 that “I will free my people at this time, not on his (Jephthah’s) account but because of the prayer that Israel prayed” (*Ego autem liberans liberabo populum meum in isto tempore, non pro eo sed pro oratione quam oravit Israel*), the mind constructs a set of counter-

⁴² Floyd L. Morelander and Rita M. Fleischer, *Latin: An Intensive Course* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977) 14.

⁴³ Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*, 230.

⁴⁴ Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*, 214–47.

⁴⁵ For instance, if I were to compare the advantages of seeing the Cher documentary instead of a Jackie Chan movie, I would still be leaving the house, driving the car, going to the theatre, paying money, sitting in a seat, etc. The differences would be the location of the film and the actual film itself.



Counterfactual Blends: Jephthah's Vow vs. People's Prayer

factual blends. In the first, Jephthah's vow has a causal effect on God's behavior; in the second mental space, the people's prayer has a causal effect on God's behavior. The text clearly chooses one of these blends over the other when God explicitly rejects the first option and affirms the alternative. Freedom is the result of the people's prayer.

In the counterfactual diagrams presented above, the only difference between the two constructions is whether Action 1 or Action 2 is causative. All other inputs remain the same.

The biblical account of Jephthah (Judges 11) does not evoke the same mental spaces as *LAB*'s account. There, Jephthah's vow appears to be the cause of victory. One can imagine a counterfactual space where there is no causal relationship between the vow and the victory, but there is no textual prompt for it. The causal connection implied by the text—that sacrificing a child pleases God and hence will bring about victory—is problematic and probably the impetus for Pseudo-Philo's more explicit examination.

Counterfactual analysis is especially helpful for places where Pseudo-Philo has re-written biblical stories by either introducing out-of-sequence biblical material or by expansion through speeches, etc. See, for instance, the analysis of Amram and Tamar in Chapter Six of this monograph.

2.4 CATEGORIES

Is Seila the equivalent of Isaac? Is Deborah really a prophet? We can only answer these questions by comparison, and comparison requires the use of categories. But there is no standard or classical understanding of category that can give us the answer to these questions. If one were to try to understand whether Seila is the equivalent of Isaac, one could compare the fact that they were both only-begotten children designated for sacrifice, and say yes. Or one could argue that Seila's female gender means she cannot be equivalent to the male Isaac. Or one could turn the question around and say that Seila was a better offering than Isaac because she went willingly, actually died and her death saved Israel. Each and every one of these solutions uses frames and blends in order to reason about categories; and the reader can often get the impression that there is a whole new meaning to the story of Seila when one uses a different frame of Isaac for comparison.

The classical—and folk—understanding of categories is that a given category has clear boundaries, and these boundaries are defined by common properties. Things belong in the same category because they have recognizable shared properties: they are the same kind of thing.⁴⁶ Something is either inside or outside of the category.

The research of Wittgenstein first challenged this understanding of category when he observed that the category *game* does not fit into this classification. Some games are about skill—tennis—while others are for enjoyment—spin the bottle. Some are dependent on luck—board games—and many but not all are competitive—Scrabble, playing with dolls. Some are played with others—baseball—while others are played alone—solitaire. Any combination of these factors may exist in a given game: Scrabble is competitive, played with others, depends in part on luck and in part on skill. Playing with dolls is non-competitive and done for enjoyment, does not depend on skill or luck, and may be played alone or with others. And there is no single characteristic that describes badminton, crossword puzzles, or Twister.

Given these facts, Wittgenstein decided that categories are constituted through “family resemblances,” in that the members resemble each other but there is no single feature which every member shares.

⁴⁶ This introduction draws from Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things*, xi–117.

Not only did Wittgenstein claim that the category *games* lacked a set of common properties, but he argued that the boundary of what constitutes a game and what does not is unclear. Boundaries, he said, were expandable. An obvious example is the way that video games and electronic pets changed the category *game* during the last generation.

Wittgenstein also argued that categories had central and non-central members. If one were asked to teach an “ice-breaker” game at the beginning of a religious retreat, “strip poker” would not be a good choice—not a central member of the category “game,” at least for that situation.

Wittgenstein was followed by other researchers, but it was Eleanor Rosch and her associates who showed that certain categories were biologically and psychologically real even when people didn’t have the language to name them. Rosch’s research laid the groundwork for “prototype and basic-level theory.” These are the concepts that categories have prototypical members, “best examples”, which are commonly recognizable, and that categories are humanly constituted to be recognized at basic levels—i.e., the level most cognitively available to human beings.⁴⁷ The existence of a prototype does not mean that other examples are not full members of a category—merely that there are members that seem to best fit some human psychological concept of the category.⁴⁸

George Lakoff builds upon the work of Rosch⁴⁹ and others when he proposes what he calls “radial categories.” In a radial category, there

⁴⁷ Hence we see a chair as a prototype, with specialization (lounge, electric chair, bar stool) and generalization (furniture, household furnishings, human manufacture) moving in opposite directions. But chair is the basic level of this category, because it is the level at which a human normally interacts. We can draw a chair; we can’t draw a “furniture”.

⁴⁸ For instance, in psychological test, a robin or a sparrow is rated as a best example of a bird, while an ostrich is not. However, that doesn’t mean that the ostrich is not fully a bird, and recognized as such.

⁴⁹ See Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things*, for summaries of the work of scholars such as John L. Austin on the relationship between different “senses” or gestalts of words (Austin, *Philosophical Papers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961); Lotfi Zadeh, who pioneered fuzzy set theory in Zadeh, “Fuzzy Sets,” *Information and Control* 8 (1965) 338–53; Floyd Lounsbury who used the study of American Indian kinship systems to speak of generative categories (Lounsbury, “A Formal Account of the Crow- and Omaha-Type Kinship Terminologies” in W. H. Goodenough, ed., *Explorations in Cultural Anthropology* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964) 351–94; Brent Berlin and Paul Kay, who hypothesize that human biology plays a part in the categorization of colors (Berlin and Kay, *Basic Color Terms: Their Universality and Evolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969)); Roger Brown, who first spoke of “first level” (basic) categorization in

is a central case plus subcategories which are deviations from the central case. However, these deviations from the central case cannot be predicted by some general law or laws. The central case may be quite rich and actually exist, as in the category “mother” where the central case is a biological female who conceived and gave birth to a child who shares her genes, is married to the child’s father, provides physical and psychological nurture, has legal guardianship, and is one generation older. Or the central case may be a skeletal example which does not actually exist in real life but is sufficient to define a category whose members DO exist: the type-scene for a last testament, for instance.⁵⁰

To illustrate how categories work, let us consider the category of “foreign woman” as constructed in Pseudo-Philo’s worldview. The central case may be a social stereotype (foreign woman as conniving, idolatrous sex object who will seduce Israelite men), a typical example (Dedilah, who conspires against Samson), an ideal (Jael, who recognizes Israel as blessed by God), a paragon (Ruth, who leaves all in order to cling to Israel), a generator (being a central case member plus rules: a woman not born to Israelite mother and father, who does not embrace Judaism and who intends to cause idolatry), submodels (for the elders in Pseudo-Philo’s chapter 9, a woman born to a Jewish mother and slave father would be a foreign idolator), and salient examples (a foreign woman who caused apostasy, such as Dedilah, rather than Jael, who aided Israel). All these women are “foreign women”, in Pseudo-Philo’s mind.

According to Lakoff, human categorization occurs through extension of central models.⁵¹ The extensions are “motivated”, in that each can be understood as a variant on the central model. While two different extensions may not be related to each other, each is still related to the

“How Shall A Thing Be Called,” *Psychological Review* 65, 14–21, and *Social Psychology* (New York: Free Press, 1965); Brent Berlin, who argued that there was a “folk-generic” level of classification at the level of genus and linked categorization to ease of human perception, in “The Concept of Rank in Ethnobiological Classification: Some Evidence from Aguaruna Folk Botany,” published in *Language, Culture, and Cognition: Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Ronald Casson (New York: MacMillan, 1981); and Paul Ekman who researched basic emotions across cultures in *Universals and Cultural Differences in Facial Expressions of Emotions*, Nebraska Symposium on Motivation series, ed. by James K. Cole (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971).

⁵⁰ See chapter 3, “Repeated actions, parallels, and analogies.”

⁵¹ Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things*, 91.

principal case.⁵² So we may have the central case of a childless woman who conceives through God's intervention (Sarah); we can envision one extension to Hannah, who also bore a son that was central to the future of Israel, and another extension to Elumah, whose son Samson didn't do much for anyone except himself. Or take the category, "People who judged Israel." The central case in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is Moses, with an extension to "good judges" such as Kenaz, Joshua, Zebul and Deborah, bad judges such as Abimelech and Jair, and "borderline judges," Jephthah and Gideon.

When one is actually engaged in a comparison of two characters, scenes, speeches, etc., one is using a mirror network. The central case constitutes one of the inputs, and the other input is the linguistic selection under examination. The blend is our determination of how well the input matches the central case.

The central case, in many of the situations I will examine, is often an ideal—that is, a case constructed from the most salient characteristics of all the cases. Sometimes the central case comes from a typical example, a paragon, a generator, or a salient example. It is important to be clear about what comprises the central case prior to any comparison between possible examples. If a scholar determines that there are sufficient points of contact—vital relations that can be compressed between the central case and the case they are testing—then they declare a "fit": the case in question belongs to the category. If there is not sufficient similarity, the test item is not a member of the category.

2.5 THE OFFERING OF SEILA: ASSESSING THE BLENDS, COUNTERFACTUAL REASONING, AND CATEGORIES IN THE WORK OF P. R. DAVIES AND B. D. CHILTON VS. BRUCE FISK

Scholars often disagree on how to interpret certain sections of text: for instance, Davies and Chilton's⁵³ assessment of what Pseudo-Philo says

⁵² Extensions may be structured by chaining—the central case is linked to a member, which is linked to another member; this kind of extension may explain some of the food laws in the Hebrew bible. Extensions may also be based on culture-specific experiential domains, idealized models, specific knowledge, "otherness," no common property, and motivation. While these concepts are interesting, they are not immediately necessary for our reading of Pseudo-Philo.

⁵³ P. R. Davies and B. D. Chilton, "The Aqedah: A Revised Tradition History," *CBQ* 40, (1978) 514–545.

about the character of Isaac differs significantly from that of Fisk.⁵⁴ Using a cognitive linguistic analysis, it appears that these scholars not only employ different inputs and different category models, but that their arguments reflect inconsistent use of the inputs which they have selected.

It is helpful here to begin by reviewing the biblical and *LAB* versions of the offering of Isaac and the holocaust of Jephthah's daughter. The relevant texts are Genesis 22, Judges 11, and *LAB* 18:5, 32:3, and 40:2. (Biblical and *LAB* texts are reprinted in full at the end of this chapter, pages 59–62.)

In Genesis 22, God tells Abraham to take his only-begotten son Isaac to Mt. Moriah and offer him as a burnt sacrifice. Abraham does this, with no resistance and virtually no comment on the part of Isaac. Abraham is stopped by an angel just as he raises his arm to sacrifice Isaac; the angel tells him that he will be blessed because of his fear of God. He will be blessed with offspring, and these descendants will be a source of blessing to the nations. Isaac does not die; the reader does not know if Isaac was willing to die; God does not bless Isaac in this text, as the only blessing comes through his father Abraham, for the people of Israel.

In Judges 11, Jephthah makes a vow that he will sacrifice the first one/first thing that comes out of his house if he is given victory over the Ammonites. He defeats the Ammonites, and his only-begotten daughter Seila comes out first. She is willing to die because she believes he must fulfill his vow. She is made a holocaust after a brief sojourn of lamentation in the mountains. She dies; she is willing; her death is expiatory for Israel.

Pseudo-Philo does not relate the story of Isaac in its chronological order, but rather refers to it in three different places: at 18:5, in the midst of a divine speech to Balaam; at 32:2–4, at the beginning of Deborah's song; and at 40:2, as part of Seila's address to her father; and in chapter. According to all three references, Isaac was willing to die.

In 18:5, Pseudo-Philo says that "in return for his [Isaac's] blood I chose them", *et pro sanguine eius elegi istos*. At 32:3, Isaac states that *erit autem mea beatitudo super omnes homines*, "my blessedness will be above that of all people." In verse 3 of chapter 40, Seila speaks of Isaac, Abraham,

⁵⁴ Bruce Fisk, *Offering Isaac Again and Again: Pseudo-Philo's Use of the Aqedah as Intertext* CBQ 62.3 (2000) 481–507.

and their willingness in the context of encouraging her father not to annul his vow, and telling him she's not sad about dying because the people have been freed.

Et quis est qui tristetur moriens, videns populum liberatum? Aut inmemor es que facta sunt in diebus patrum nosterum, quando pater filium inponebat in holocaustum, et non contradixit ei sed epulans consensit illi, et erat qui offerebatur paratus, et qui offerebat gaudens?

And who is there who would be sad to die, seeing the people freed? Or have you forgotten what happened in the day of our fathers when the father placed the son as a burnt offering, and he did not dispute him but gladly gave consent to him, and the one being offered was ready and the one who was offering was rejoicing? (*LAB* 40:2)

While Pseudo-Philo is negative about Jephthah's vow, and argues that prayers of the people, not the vow, were responsible for Israel's victory, Pseudo-Philo is very positive about Seila. Even God approves of Seila, her plans, and her wisdom. So her death is ambiguous: approved of by God, the result of a thoughtless and impetuous vow. It is unclear whether any efficacy resides in her death; but the mention of Isaac here is not about the usefulness of his death but about his positive attitude.

Finally, Pseudo-Philo does not necessarily say that Isaac died,⁵⁵ though it does state that his blood is acceptable to God and the cause of God choosing Israel (18:5). This brings Pseudo-Philo close to other recountings of the Aqedah where Isaac's blood is said to have been shed.

So Pseudo-Philo has added to the character of Isaac: Isaac is now a willing sacrifice and, regardless of whether he actually dies or lives, his sacrifice is the cause of God choosing Israel and blessing all people. The promise given to Abraham in the Genesis text has been transferred to Isaac in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*.

When we turn to Jephthah's daughter, we see more changes in Pseudo-Philo's retelling. As mentioned above, the language of Pseudo-Philo regarding the efficacy of Seila's death is ambiguous. In 39:11, God is angry because Jephthah's vow is careless: it could have been any old dog that was offered up. So God declares that the sacrifice will be Jephthah's only-begotten daughter, and goes on to state that the victory

⁵⁵ However, the sequence in which the story is told gives the impression that Isaac has actually been offered up; it is only in the parallel line that one learns that he has merely been bound. My thanks to Antoinette Wire for pointing this out.

is not “on account of him (Jephthah) but because of the prayer that Israel prayed”, *non pro eo sed pro oratione quam oravit Israel*.

But in 40:3, Seila notes, “If I will not offer myself willingly for sacrifice, I fear that my death would not be acceptable.” (*Si spontaneam me non obtulero in sacrificium, timeo ne non sit acceptabilis mor mea.*) Seila’s sense of the importance of her death is affirmed by God when he says that “her death will be precious before me always,” *erit mors eius preciosa ante conspectum meum omni tempore* (40:4). God’s statements problematize the question of whether Seila’s death is expiatory or not. On one hand, the vow is not the effective device; on the other, God approves her conviction that she must die willingly or her death will be in vain.

In her speech, Seila also reminds her father that not only must he keep his vow but that he should do so rejoicing.

The chapter concludes as Seila is killed, and mourned, as in the biblical passage. Overall, *LAB*’s version underlines the biblical theme of Seila’s willingness, enhances the status of her character by emphasizing her wisdom, and retains her sacrificial death. While in 39:11 God disparages Jephthah’s vow, in 40:4 God extols Seila’s wisdom, approves of her request to die, and announces that her death is pleasing and precious.⁵⁶

Davies and Chilton are engaged in an attempt to trace the tradition history of the Aqedah: in particular, they seek to prove that there is no pre-Christian Aqedah, that the idea of someone’s death as an atoning sacrifice is not found in Jewish documents before the Tannaitic and Amoraic periods. The Aqedah, they say, came into being after the fall of the temple, when the sacrifice of Isaac becomes “the locus of the vicarious atonement previously acquired through the now defunct Tamid.”⁵⁷

On the other hand, Bruce Fisk argues that *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is an important witness to the emergence of the Aqedah tradition and that Isaac’s self-offering, in *LAB*, is “a warrant for blessing and even election.”⁵⁸ For Fisk, the character of Isaac in Pseudo-Philo is fully involved in his own sacrifice and the subsequent choice of Israel as God’s people. While he agrees with Davies and Chilton that the text

⁵⁶ God’s statement clearly problematizes the efficacy of Jephthah’s vow. Whether it also challenges the efficacy of Seila’s sacrifice is open to discussion. Certainly God’s subsequent remarks support a positive view of Seila’s death.

⁵⁷ Davies and Chilton, *The Aqedah*, 517.

⁵⁸ Fisk, *Offering Isaac*, 499.

does not exhibit a fully formed Aqedah doctrine, he believes that *LAB* is one of the significant steps in the development of that interpretive tradition.

In order to see how these scholars arrived at such different conclusion, one must analyze the mental spaces by which they reason: what categories have they constructed, and how have they compared them?

Davies and Chilton define the Aqedah as “a haggadic presentation of the vicariously atoning sacrifice of Isaac in which he is said, e.g., to have shed his blood freely and/or to have been reduced to ashes.”⁵⁹ This description defines an ideal case in a radial category, a case to which all other cases will be compared. In this instance, the ideal case is an Isaac who willingly gave up his life, actually died, and accomplished some kind of atonement or benefit for others through this sacrifice.

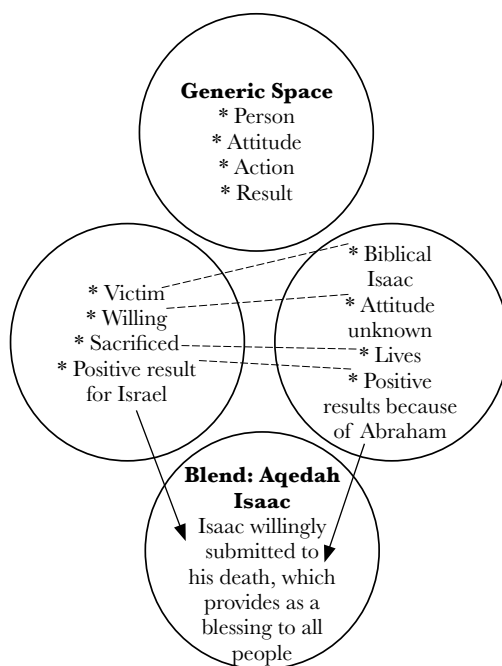
This portrait of Isaac, which Davies and Chilton use as their test case, contains not just the traits attributed to him in the Genesis 22 story, but additional qualities which are the result of blending in subsequent re-interpretations. The “Aqedah Isaac” is achieved over time, by repeatedly combining the biblical character of Isaac with scenarios of a willing victim whose death is efficacious for the community.⁶⁰ (Technically, these successive interpretations are repeated double scope blends.) Throughout the different intertestamental writings, one finds descriptions of Isaac that contain one or more of these characteristics, until rabbinic times when the “Aqedah Isaac” is fully established.

The blend below shows a schematic of how the Isaac of Genesis 22 gradually became “Aqedah Isaac.”

Having established a portrait of the “Aqedah Isaac” for comparison, Davies and Chilton analyze what Pseudo-Philo says about Isaac. But in fact, they move between the Genesis passage and Pseudo-Philo repeatedly and inconsistently. The portrait of Isaac which they construct from *LAB* is a double-scope blend, using input from the biblical text and from *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. One cannot predict, in a double scope blend, what elements from the inputs will be active in the blend. But it is interesting to see what, in the arguments of Davies and Chilton, has been rejected. If Pseudo-Philo is supposed to be a re-telling of the story,

⁵⁹ Davies and Chilton, *The Aqedah*, 515.

⁶⁰ As noted above, the scenario of the willing victim and efficacious death could come from the story of Jephthah's daughter, from tales of the Maccabean martyrs, and other similar sources.



Repeated pairings of these two inputs eventually result in the culturally common blend: Aqedah Isaac

there is no point in the re-telling unless the new material gets blended with the old. At certain points, their analysis does not allow this.

Davies and Chilton draw the property of willingness from the *LAB* portrait of Isaac, but ignore the silence of the biblical text on this feature. However, when they consider whether it is Abraham's or Isaac's obedience that results in God's preference for Israel, they ignore *LAB* 18:5 with the claim that "for the sake of his blood I chose them", and instead attribute God's selection of Israel to Abraham's behavior.⁶¹ Further, they argue that the claim in *LAB* 32 that through Isaac nations will be blessed is no different than the biblical proclamation that the nations were to be blessed through Abraham's offspring.

⁶¹ The full statement "...because he did not object, his offering was acceptable before me and for the sake of his blood I chose them..." makes it clear that "his" refers to Isaac, not Abraham.

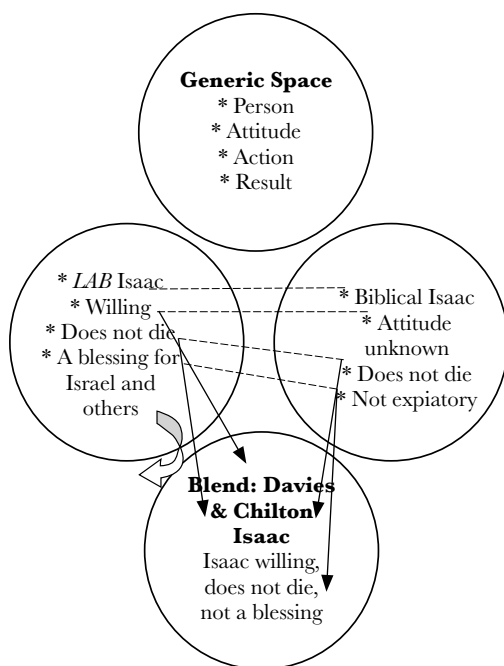
Finally, when examining the character Seila, Davies and Chilton argue that her death was for the good of Israel (importing this conclusion from Judges 11, since Pseudo-Philo waffles on this point) but want to say that Isaac's death was not beneficial, since the biblical test was a test of his father, not himself, and therefore all blessing accrues through Abraham. Again, they have chosen the conclusion offered by the biblical text. They argue that Isaac is introduced into Seila's speech only because Abraham should serve as a model for Jephthah. Isaac is present as a model of a martyr, not as an expiatory sacrifice. He merely provides "an illustration of the proper conduct in such circumstances."⁶² However, if one sees Isaac as a martyr instead of expiatory sacrifice, then one has to ask why his story is being inserted here. The point of contact which allows the comparison is supposed to be the similarity between Isaac and Seila: it is patently not the likeness between Abraham and Jephthah.⁶³ If one sees Isaac as a martyr, then one has to see Seila as a martyr, not an efficacious sacrifice: the characteristic of martyr has to come from somewhere in order to end up in the blend!⁶⁴ Since in Davies and Chilton's eyes Seila's death was for the good of Israel, their argument that she is not a martyr is specious.

A schematic illustration of the blend involved in their thinking would look like this:

⁶² Chilton and Davies, *The Aqedah*, 527. I would agree that the issue addressed here by Pseudo-Philo is Jephthah's inappropriate response. But this is not the reason why the text is found at this point: the similarity of theme—*father sacrificing only begotten to Yahweh*—between Genesis 22 and Judges 11 is so very marked that the comparison can hardly be avoided. Once the story has been introduced into the blend, then one can reason with it. In this case, *LAB* is using the difference in the fathers' attitudes to show one more way in which Jephthah falls short (hence reinforcing the negative evaluation of child sacrifice.) But once the blend is introduced, one doesn't get to stop in the middle and control the results. Placing Isaac and Seila in such close proximity encourages us to think about them in the same way. As a matter of fact, it seems obvious that the blend between the two precedes Pseudo-Philo's version, since Isaac has already acquired the trait of willingness to die, for which the only biblical parallel is Seila.

⁶³ My thanks to Erich Gruen who pointed out this discrepancy.

⁶⁴ Even if the source of the concept that willing martyrdom is efficacious for Israel comes as the result of later stories, such as the Maccabean martyrs, there should be no question that both Isaac and Seila are being presented in the same framework.

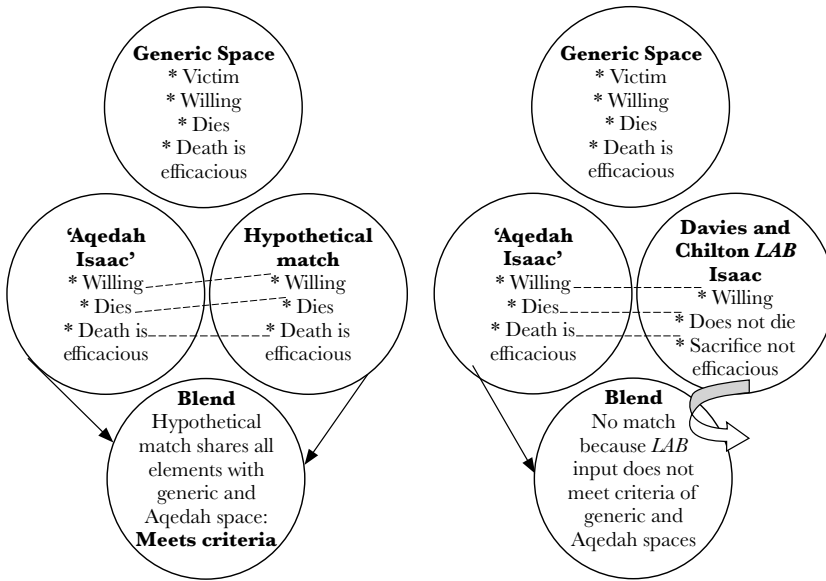


Blend: Davies and Chilton Isaac

Since this is a double scope blend, and touted as a re-telling, one would expect that the input “blessing” would transfer into the blended space. The Isaac that Davies and Chilton construct has willingness imported from *LAB* but has the non-efficacy of the sacrifice imported from the Genesis biblical passage. It is this changeling Isaac to which they compare “Aqedah Isaac”.

The second problem with their analysis occurs when they make the comparison with Aqedah Isaac. Mentally, they employ a classical category, where membership within the category depends on being identical to the ideal case; one is either in or out. There must be a match on all counts or this text does not attest to the existence of the doctrine. Not surprisingly, their construction of *LAB*’s Isaac doesn’t meet their category specifications, and they thereby declare that Pseudo-Philo shows no evidence of the Aqedah.

In order to construct this kind of classical category, one has to imagine a blending scenario where the generic space contains all of the characteristics of the ideal case (the “Aqedah Isaac” input). The second input space has to match both the generic mental space and the first input



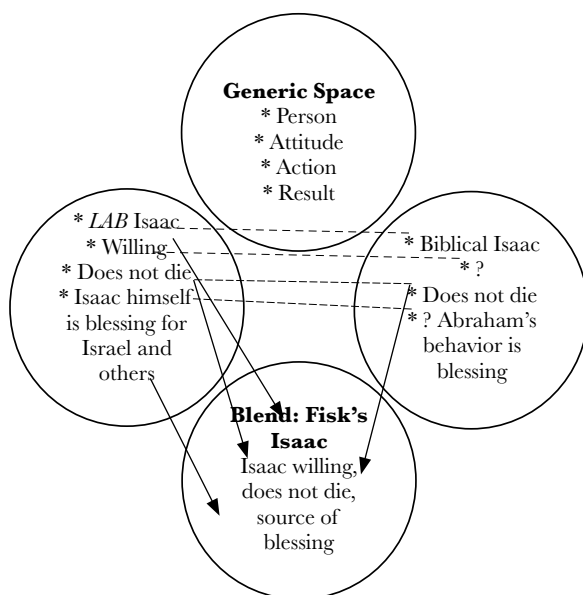
Davies and Chilton Counterfactual Based on Classical Category

space exactly. But of course, if it matched exactly, one would not need to even run the blend.

There is nothing that says one can't employ a classical category in scholarship. However, one never really does this. Scholars routinely select certain properties and focus on these, ignoring others. There are no perfect matches (unless the material examined is absolutely identical). In every comparison, one has to make a judgment whether some case is in or out. For instance, Seila could be a perfect match on the items they said were important, but would be excluded by some people because of her gender, and included by others who felt that gender was not determinative of a match.

From the point of view of a cognitive scientist, Davies and Chilton have constructed a set of counterfactual blends, with one of the counterfactuals showing what a match to their category should look like and the other blend showing how Pseudo-Philo's Isaac is not a match.

On the left is an illustration of what would have to be present in order for a blend to work when one is using a classical category. On the right is the case of Pseudo-Philo's Isaac, as Davies and Chilton read it. Obviously, a match is impossible. They have defined their category,



Blend: Fisk's Isaac

and constructed their input, in such a way as to rule out *LAB*'s portrait of Isaac as an example of the Aqedah doctrine.

One finds substantially different conclusions in Bruce Fisk's article on the same texts. To begin with, Fisk believes that when Isaac is introduced into the story of Jephthah's daughter, the texts are mutually interpretive. Isaac gains the qualities of

...heroic virtue and courageous submission...Precisely because the biblical daughter of Jephthah gave verbal consent to her fate and because her death was bound up with Israel's triumph, Pseudo-Philo can intrude these themes into the Isaac story so that now a fitting retelling of the Aqedah must likewise emphasize Isaac's willingness and the benefits accrued to Israel, and not just Abraham's obedience.⁶⁵

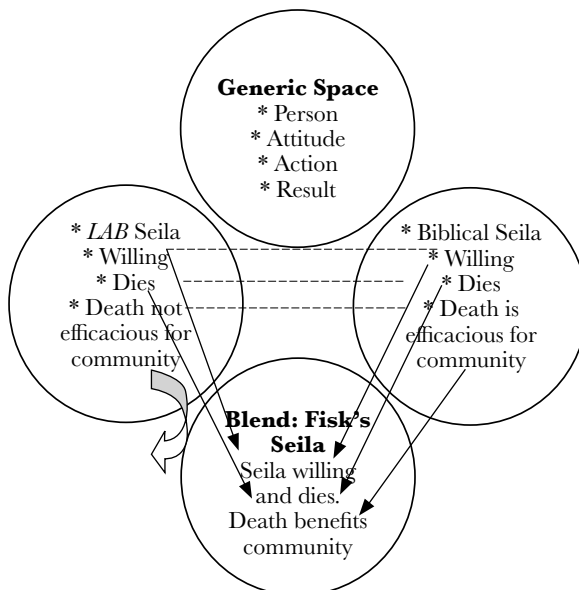
Fisk also argues that in chapter 18, Isaac's willingness and his blood make the offering acceptable to God—and election follows from that offering.

⁶⁵ Fisk, *Offering Isaac*, 93. He notes that the significant parallel here, besides father sacrificing only begotten to Yahweh, is the willingness of the two victims. What he doesn't note is that the significant discord is between the sacrificing parents: Abraham was willing and Jephthah, it seems, was not. I would argue that the Genesis reference has been introduced not only because of the "father sacrifices only begotten to Yahweh theme"—which is certainly a powerful frame!—but also because of the dissonance between the fathers' attitudes. In this respect, Davies and Chilton are likely correct.

Likewise, in *LAB* 32:5, he holds that the text establishes a clear link between Isaac's laudable character and the blessing which follows.

Fisk constructs the character of Isaac quite differently than Chilton and Davies. While Fisk reads Pseudo-Philo and the Bible in tandem, he sees that taking "re-written" biblical material seriously means being willing to allow *LAB*'s statements and inferences to override those of the bible.

However, like Davies and Chilton, Fisk is not consistent in the construction of his inputs. When Fisk argues that the portraits of Seila and Isaac are mutually interpretive, he begins by constructing a portrait of Seila that allows the Judges 11 assertion that Seila's death was redemptive for the community to take precedence over the ambiguity of Pseudo-Philo's rendering of the story. In fact, Seila's death in *LAB* is *not* bound up with Israel's triumph. Israel's victory is, God states, the result of the people's prayer. Her death is the unfortunate result of her father's impetuousness. While God approves of her, personally, it is not at all clear what Pseudo-Philo wants us to think of her death in relation to the good of the community. Her speech indicates that if she were not willing to die, her life would be sacrificed without purpose. However, this does not necessarily mean that the sacrifice of her life has some positive effect on Israel, other than the prevention of other child sacrifice.



Blend: Fisk's Seila

Above is the double scope blend that Fisk is using for constructing Seila. Fisk, like Davies and Chilton, has chosen to emphasize certain aspects of the biblical story over Pseudo-Philo's re-telling.

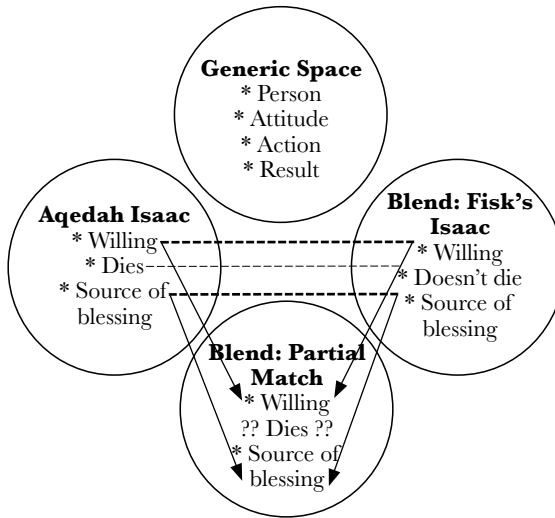
When Fisk argues that Isaac has benefited from comparison with—that is, has acquired some of the characteristics of—Seila, he actually means that the sketch of Isaac in Pseudo-Philo represents an Isaac enhanced by comparison with the biblical Jephthah's daughter, not by comparison with the representation of Seila offered in *LAB* 40. Given that Isaac is depicted elsewhere in *LAB* as a willing and efficacious sacrifice, one must assume that this blend did not just occur as Pseudo-Philo compared Seila and Isaac in chapter 40, but was present as a cognitive construct prior to this particular re-telling.⁶⁶

Fisk, along with Davies and Chilton, has chosen to construct his input for comparison by ignoring some of the material in the *LAB* re-telling and instead holding onto the biblical version of the story. For Davies and Chilton, this occurs in their construction of Isaac, while Fisk pulls his punches in the construction of Seila. However, these inconsistent readings have very different effects on the author's final conclusions, because in the end it is Isaac, not Seila, who is under consideration.

As noted above, Davies and Chilton have conceived of the Aqedah as a rigid classical category, where a test case is included only if it has elements identical to the ideal case. Given the way that they constructed *LAB*'s Isaac, and the way that they conceptualized a suitable match, they found no trace of the Aqedah doctrine in Pseudo-Philo. In contrast, Fisk constructs an Isaac with different elements, and treats "Aqedah Isaac" as a radial category: there can be partial match. A partial match points, for Fisk, to evidence of the ongoing development of the doctrine.

When a scholar uses a radial category to assess material, she or he is employing a cognitive mirror network. In the following illustration, the ideal case is "Aqedah Isaac" and Fisk's construction of "*LAB* Isaac" is the other input space. The question of death—which represents a clash between the input mental spaces—is ignored by Fisk when he declares a match between the two. This interpretation is open for discussion, but is not particularly idiosyncratic or unsupportable.

⁶⁶ One can't, of course, determine whether the cognitive blend of Isaac as willing and effective sacrifice was the result of Pseudo-Philo's creativity or was a pre-existing cultural construct. No more can one determine that this construct is the result of blending the biblical Isaac and the biblical Jephthah's daughter, though that certainly seems like a reasonable hypothesis.



Blend: Fisk's Partial Match

I would argue that both of these articles dealing with the presence or non-presence of the Aqedah doctrine have erred in the same way: they have inconsistently blended the materials concerning the characters of Isaac and Seila. Chilton and Davies use the biblical text to limit what Pseudo-Philo says about Isaac; Fisk uses the biblical text to add to and possibly contradict what Pseudo-Philo says about Seila. Davies and Chilton's assessment leads them to argue incorrectly, I believe, that *LAB*'s Isaac does not exhibit qualities of the Aqedah Isaac. Fisk's interpretation calls into question his assertion that Isaac gained the qualities of willingness and beneficence from the portrait of Seila. However, since it is clear that the portrait of Isaac presented here differs from the biblical portrait (though the changes are not necessarily the result of Pseudo-Philo's editing but most likely occurred prior to the writing of this text), in the end his conclusions are more faithful to the text.

In regard to the question of whether *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* presents an example of the Aqedah doctrine, wherein Isaac is seen as a willing sacrifice whose death is efficacious for the community, the cognitive perspective agrees with Fisk, contra Davies and Chilton. Pseudo-Philo's Isaac is not just an exemplary martyr; he has indeed acquired the characteristic of expiation. This characteristic is clearer in chapter 32 than in chapter 40, perhaps because of Pseudo-Philo's discomfort with the concept that child sacrifice could be efficacious. While the match between "Aqedah Isaac" and "*LAB* Isaac" is not

identical, the difference between the biblical Isaac and the depiction in *LAB* is remarkable indeed, and must be acknowledged.

CONCLUSIONS

In the preceding section, I have shown how close examination of the cognitive blends invoked by Pseudo-Philo can shed light on questions of interpretation. When one uses cognitive methods to examine the unspecified, often unconscious assumptions behind scholarly assertions, it becomes easier to identify who is reading what into the text. The difficulty of reading a first century text with 21st century eyes cannot be underestimated: because of the canonical status of the Bible, it is easy to forget that the original audience of this text may have found Pseudo-Philo's revisions convincing. And even if all of them didn't, one must read *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* on its own terms, giving credence to the conclusions it wants the reader to make, before trumping it with biblical assumptions.

Direct inspection of the text with a cognitive perspective can clarify not just the errors of commentators but also the underlying theology of the book. Throughout Pseudo-Philo, one finds conventional, primary and culturally primary metaphors, but also "metaphors" (i.e., double scope blends) for the God-human relationship where target features are not suppressed, or seemingly contradictory metaphors are used side by side. One often finds a blend where one of the input spaces is an established cultural metaphor and the other input space is something not usually implied by that metaphor—a kind of twist or inclination particular to Pseudo-Philo. For instance, in many cases that input space introduces the irreversible, irrevocable, innate inability of human beings to do other than evil. In other cases, a given input may emphasize God's absolute righteousness.

I would argue that close examination of the inputs and results of these blends helps reveal the text's underlying theology and ideology. By "unpacking" them, examining the domains which contribute to them and the emergent structure which comes as a result of the blend, one can identify the unspoken, possibly unconscious implications of the text. Because both blending theory and metaphor theory argue that metaphors are a way of thinking, and that metaphors do cognitive work, we can rightfully ask what instinctive cognitive work is being performed by these metaphors. Though the work may be unconscious, the product is no less real.

GENESIS 22:1-19⁶⁷

After these things God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac; and he cut the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off. Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the ass; I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham said, "God will provide himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So they went both of them together.

When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. Then Abraham put forth his hand and took the knife to slay his son. But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here am I." He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called the name of that place "The LORD will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

The angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, "By myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will indeed bless you, and I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore. And your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies, and by your descendants shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves, because you have obeyed my voice." So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beer-sheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba.

⁶⁷ Translation: Revised Standard Edition.

JUDGES 11:30–40⁶⁸

And Jephthah made a vow to the LORD, and said, “If thou wilt give the Ammonites into my hand, then whoever comes forth from the doors of my house to meet me, when I return victorious from the Ammonites, shall be the LORD’s, and I will offer him up for a burnt offering.” So Jephthah crossed over to the Ammonites to fight against them; and the LORD gave them into his hand. And he smote them from Aroer to the neighborhood of Minnith, twenty cities, and as far as Abel-keramim, with a very great slaughter. So the Ammonites were subdued before the people of Israel.

Then Jephthah came to his home at Mizpah; and behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances; she was his only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter. And when he saw her, he rent his clothes, and said, “Alas, my daughter! You have brought me very low, and you have become the cause of great trouble to me; for I have opened my mouth to the LORD, and I cannot take back my vow.” And she said to him, “My father, if you have opened your mouth to the LORD, do to me according to what has gone forth from your mouth, now that the LORD has avenged you on your enemies, on the Ammonites.” And she said to her father, “Let this thing be done for me; let me alone two months, that I may go and wander on the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my companions.” And he said, “Go.” And he sent her away for two months; and she departed, she and her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains. And at the end of two months, she returned to her father, who did with her according to his vow which he had made. She had never known a man. And it became a custom in Israel that the daughters of Israel went year by year to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in the year.

LIBER ANTIQUITATUM BIBLICARUM 18:5

And he said to him, “Was it not concerning this people that I spoke to Abraham in a vision, saying, ‘Your seed will be like the stars of the heaven,’ when I lifted him above the firmament and showed him the arrangements of all the stars? I demanded his son as a burnt offering and he brought him to be placed on the altar. But I gave him back to his father and, because he did not object, his offering was acceptable before me, and in return for his blood I chose them. Then I said to the angels of the service, ‘Was it not of this man that I said, “I will reveal everything I am doing to Abraham...”’”

⁶⁸ Translation: Revised Standard Edition.

Et dixit ad eum: Nonne de hoc populo locutus sum Abrahe in visu dicens: Erit semen tuum tamquam sidera celi, quando levavi eum super firmamentum et ostendi ei omnium astrorum dispositiones? Et filium eius petii in holocaustomata et adduxit eum ut componeretur in sacrario, ego autem reddidi eum patri suo et, quia non contradixit, facta est oblatio eius in conspectu meo acceptabilis, et pro sanguine eius elegi istos. Et dixi tunc angelis minute operantibus: Nonne de hoc dixi: Ego revelabo Abrahe omnia que ego facio.

LIBER ANTIQUITATUM BIBLICARUM 32:2–4

Since they were jealous of him, God said to him, ‘Kill the fruit of your belly for me, and offer for me as a sacrifice what has been given to you by me.’ Abraham did not dispute, but set out immediately. When he set out, he said to his son, ‘Behold now, my son, I am offering you as a burnt-offering and am delivering you into the hands of the one who gave you to me.’

The son said to the father, ‘Hear me, father. If a lamb of the flock is accepted as an offering to the Lord as an odor of sweetness and if for the sins of men animals are appointed to be killed, but man is designed to inherit the world, how is it that you do not say to me, “Come and inherit a secure life and time without measure”? What if I had not been born into the world to be offered as a sacrifice to him who made me? Now my blessedness will be above that of all men, because there will be no other. Through me nations will be blessed and through me the peoples will understand that the Lord has deemed the soul of a man worthy to be a sacrifice.’

When he had offered his son upon the altar and had bound his feet so as to kill him, the Lord hastened and sent forth his voice from on high saying, ‘Do not slay your son, do not destroy the fruit of your belly. For now I have made you known to those who do not know you and have shut the mouths of those who always malign you. Your memory will be before me always, and your name and his from generation to generation.’

Et factum est cum zelarent eum, dixit ad eum Deus: Occide fructum ventris tui pro me, et offer pro me sacrificium quod donatum est tibi a me. Et Abraham non contradixit, sed profectus est statim. Et cum proficisceretur, dixit ad filium suum: Ecce nunc fili offero te holocaustomata, et in manus te trado qui donavit te mihi.

Filius autem dixit ad patrem: Audi me pater. Si agnus ex pecoribus acceptatur in oblationes Domini in odorem suavitatis, et pro iniquitatibus hominum pecora constituta sunt in occisionem, homo autem positus est in hereditatem seculi, et quomodo nunc dicis mihi: Veni et hereditare securam vitam et immensurabile tempus? Quid si non essem natus in seculo, ut offerer sacrificium ei qui me fecit? Erit autem mea beatitudo super omnes homines quia non erit aliud, et in me annuntiabuntur generationes et per me intelligent populi, quoniam dignificavit Dominus animam hominis in sacrificium.

Et cum obtulisset pater filium in aram, et ligasset ei pedes, ut eum occideret, festinavit Fortissimus et misit de alto vocem suam dicens: Non interficias filium tuum, neque

disperdas fructum ventris tui. Nunc enim manifestavi ut appareres ignorantibus te, et clausi ora maledicentium semper adversus te. Erit autem memoria tua in conspectu meo in sempiternum, et erit nomen tuum et huius in generationem et generationem.

LIBER ANTIQUITATUM BIBLICARUM 40:2

Seila his daughter said to him, “Who is there who would be sad to die, seeing the people freed? Or have you forgotten what happened in the days of our fathers when the father placed the son as a burnt offering, and he did not dispute him but gladly gave consent to him, and the one being offered was ready and the one who was offering was rejoicing?

Et dixit ei Seila filia eius: et quis est qui tristetur moriens, videns populum liberatum? Aut inmemor es que facta sunt in diebus patrum nostrorum, quando pater filium imponebat in holocaustum, et non contradixit ei sed epulans consensit illi, et erat qui offerebatur paratus, et qui offerebat gaudens?

PART TWO

NARRATIVE AND RHETORICAL METHODS

CHAPTER THREE

ROBERT ALTER'S NARRATIVE THEORY THROUGH A CONCEPTUAL LENS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Mark Turner has argued that the world of English literary studies has become “fragmented, isolated, and inconsequential... (and that) contemporary critical theory is unanchored.”¹ Literary studies lack grounding in the “concept of language and literature as acts of the everyday human mind.”² While Turner makes these arguments regarding the field of English literature, I would not hesitate to apply his criticisms to the literary study of the Bible. The parade of criticisms that meanders through the world of English scholarship has been imported into biblical studies, resulting in a similar lack of grounding.

While the original impetus for importing literary criticisms to biblical scholarship was a desire to bring about the well-deserved death of the alleged “universal and objective” reading, what has sprung up in its place is a whole range of readings and counter-readings. A multitude of methodological assertions leaves the intelligent reader in a difficult spot: how can one know whether the narrative that one is building is coherent and truly motivated by the text? Isn't all reading just reading in? Is there such a thing as a “better” reading? Do formal poetics assist one in understanding a reading? Can a reading be stable—that is, repeatable—without committing the mortal sin of claiming universality and objectivity?

Robert Alter has argued that it is possible to do an intelligent and stable reading of a text if one understands the distinctive principles of that text, the cultural and linguistic world in which the text was shaped. He holds that literary criticism can develop “usable tools,” and that close scrutiny of “representative texts” in a culture can yield principles that can be applied to a range of texts advantageously. Alter

¹ Mark Turner, *Reading Minds: The Study of English in the Age of Cognitive Science* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991) vi.

² Turner, *Reading Minds*, 6.

argues that his reading of biblical stories is repeatable by others if one understands the “distinctive principle of biblical narrative.”³ While he acknowledges that reading is a complex act, he suggests that there are general rubrics in a text that are the result of culture and language, and that attending to these rubrics can lead one toward a replicable reading, one that would be understood by others who share linguistic skills and conceptual resources. At the very least, that would include readers of the age in which the text was written, and hopefully would include educated readers of this age.

Not only does Alter believe that a stable reading is possible, he argues that one can and must move from formal structures to “...a deeper understanding of the values, the moral vision embodied in a particular kind of narrative.”⁴ Alter’s conviction, which he admits is unfashionable, flies in the face of most contemporary literary criticism.

Contemporary cognitive linguists and scientists like Mark Turner would agree with Alter that a stable and sensitive reading is possible when one understands the cultural and linguistic rubrics of a text. Conscious conceptual models are well suited to analyze Alter’s methodology; the categories that Alter has identified in biblical literature closely parallel what a contemporary cognitive linguist might say about the same texts. What is distinctive about a text’s genre—a literary structure—will also be distinctive about a text’s frame—the conceptual model. Alter’s type-scenes also act as frames, conventional cognitive models, by which one is able to reason about the text. Repetition of words and actions allows one to construct and compare mental categories; narration and dialogue can be analyzed as counterfactual mental spaces, the comparison of which allows one to reason about their differences. In short, the framework which Alter has constructed through his closely reasoned and intuitive reading is generally supported by the research about cognitive phenomena.

Readers of “sacred texts,” who in every generation read in order to re-create meaning and apply that meaning to their lives, must consider not only the ancient language and milieu but also the consequences of present day application. The study of social location is a useful tool for biblical literary analysis as it can awaken readers to the possibility

³ Alter’s focus is upon the Hebrew Bible rather than the Christian New Testament.

⁴ Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, (New York: Basic Books for the Jewish Publication Society of America, 1981) x.

that direct translation of an ancient text to the present day may have serious and painful consequences.⁵ But *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is a weird and distant text, removed from 21st century readers by two thousand years, three languages,⁶ and a vastly different culture. Unlike the Hebrew Bible or the Christian Testament, it is not a text that is in use by a faith community. What is needed for *LAB* is a reading method that attends to Pseudo-Philo's own culture and style, attempting to read the text on its own merits.

I have chosen to use Alter's methodology not only for its intuitive resemblance to cognitive linguistics. But since *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is a re-written Bible, and since it consciously adopts the biblical language and style, Alter's categories—carefully and conscientiously outlined, focusing on what is distinctive in the biblical text, and developed in light of what can be known of the culture and language of the time—would seem to be applicable to this re-written Bible. While probably removed by several centuries from the final redaction of the biblical text, *LAB* is constructed in a manner meant to invoke biblical memories and categories.⁷

Neither Alter nor contemporary cognitive linguistic theorists would argue for the return of the monolithic reading. However, both would argue that there is a common reading, a reading understood by most people in the culture that produced the text. It is this common reading which I am attempting to isolate in my analysis of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*.

According to Alter, there are "four general rubrics" to which a conscientious reader should attend when reading the biblical story: the **choice of words and actions**, the **repetition of words and actions**, the focus on **dialogue**, and the **omniscience and unobtrusiveness**

⁵ I would argue that a cognitive scientific analysis of a socially located reading is possible, wherein the reader incorporates not only the frames and blends common to the dominant contemporary culture but also those frames and blends that would be invisible to the dominant consciousness. Virtually every reader will understand the dominant blends, because they are alive in the wider culture; but members of a subculture will likely be more conscious of and willing to critique the implications of those blends for persons of non-dominant race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual preference.

⁶ Given that no communities presently speak medieval Latin.

⁷ Other points of contact between the texts include production in Israel (which is true for at least part of the Hebrew Bible!) and production within the believing Jewish community. Pseudo-Philo obviously shows additional influences, such as contact with Greco-Roman historical and romantic literature.

of the narration.⁸ In the following sections, I will examine Alter's understanding of these rubrics and analyze them using the findings of contemporary cognitive linguistics. By employing conceptual analysis on the phenomena identified by Alter, I will show how Alter's work either coheres with or differs from the findings of contemporary cognitive science, and just how literary events and categories can be understood as cognitive events and categories.

3.2 CHOICE AND REPETITION OF WORDS AND PHRASES

Alter directs our attention to repeated words, by which he means both words and phrases. Cognitive grammarians would agree with Alter that a language form that is repeated deserves our attention. Specific language serves as a prompt for a specific mental space; each usage evokes a conceptual model. The mental space is neither rigid, nor is it shifting endlessly (as deconstructionists would argue), but rather serves as a stable prompt for a conceptual model. Language prompts for the conceptual model, which the mind then uses subconsciously to reason. Repetition of language forms means repeated activation of conceptual models. But which conceptual models, and how do we use them?

In order to speak of the impact of the repetition of words, one must first consider categories. Contemporary research into categories refutes the classical idea that one calls certain things by the same name because they are at least partially identical. A brand—as in an iron implement that is heated and then placed on an animal in order to burn a mark into its skin—is not in any way identical to the mark on the flank of a cow; and neither are these partially identical to the tag that says “Levis” on my jeans pocket. Yet English speakers understand that these meanings are in some way related: the first two causally, as the hot iron causes the mark, and the third through a metaphoric connection with the skin design.

These senses of the word “brand” all belong in the same category. But how do we understand that category if it is not based on resemblance? Cognitive research indicates that polysemous words form prototypical categories; that is, the senses of the word constitute the category, but some senses are more central, or prototypical, while others are non-

⁸ Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 178–85.

central.⁹ Which meaning of the word gets called up when I say, "Look at that brand!" depends on whether we're in the barn inspecting tools, leaning over a fence looking at the herd, or trying to find bargains at Costco. The language form prompts for the cognitive model; the context or frame will direct which part of the model we choose, which meaning we use.

A frame, as noted in the earlier chapter, is a cognitive set of associated items, roles, behaviors, etc. Once this frame is evoked, unless there is a conscious attempt to change context, it is likely that the initial understanding of a repeated language form will be understood as belonging to the same sense as the prior usage. If I were to say "Move those fire dogs aside before you clean up the hearth", and five minutes later ask, "Where are the dogs?" you will probably think of fireplace implements before beagles.

In *LAB* 27, the word *scio* (know) is repeated six different times, and contrasted with *cognosco* (recognize).¹⁰ While these words are often translated as if they were virtually identical, there is a slight variation in their dictionary meanings. *Cognosco*, which derives from the Greek *gnosis* (knowledge) plus the prefix *co* (with), carries the sense of investigating for the purpose of knowing. *Cognosco* implies exploration of a source of information in order to learn. *Scio*, on the other hand, suggest that one knows, understands, perceives, or has a skill in something, presumably without any present investigation or effort.¹¹

Both *scio* and *cognosco* are polysemous; that is, there are a number of different ways in which they could be understood. The range of meaning in *LAB*'s use of *scio* would include knowledge of one's own and other's internal states (25:9, "to know whether or not God cares for them," *scire si curam de isdem habet Deus*), judgment (25:13, "to know if what had been said were true," *sciremus si manifesta essent que dicta fuerant*), discovery (6:7, "if anyone knows what I have said to you, I will burn you in the fire," *si quis scierit que dixi ad vos, igni vos concremabo*), knowledge of the past (25:3, "You know how often Moses commanded you," *Scitis*

⁹ Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things*, 18.

¹⁰ Obviously, since this text was written in Hebrew, translated into Greek and thence to Latin, we are not dealing with the original verbs. It is certainly possible that the word play in these chapters is the result of a redactor rather than an author. However, one expects that a competent redactor would pay attention to such nuances, as they are common in biblical literature.

¹¹ Sir William Smith and Sir John Lockwood, *Chambers-Murray Latin-English Dictionary* (Cambridge: University Press, 1997) 121, 666.

quanta vobis mandavit Moyses), and predictions of the future (6:9, “For I know that the evil plan... will not stand,” *Scio enim quia non permanebit consilium iniquitatis... vana est*).

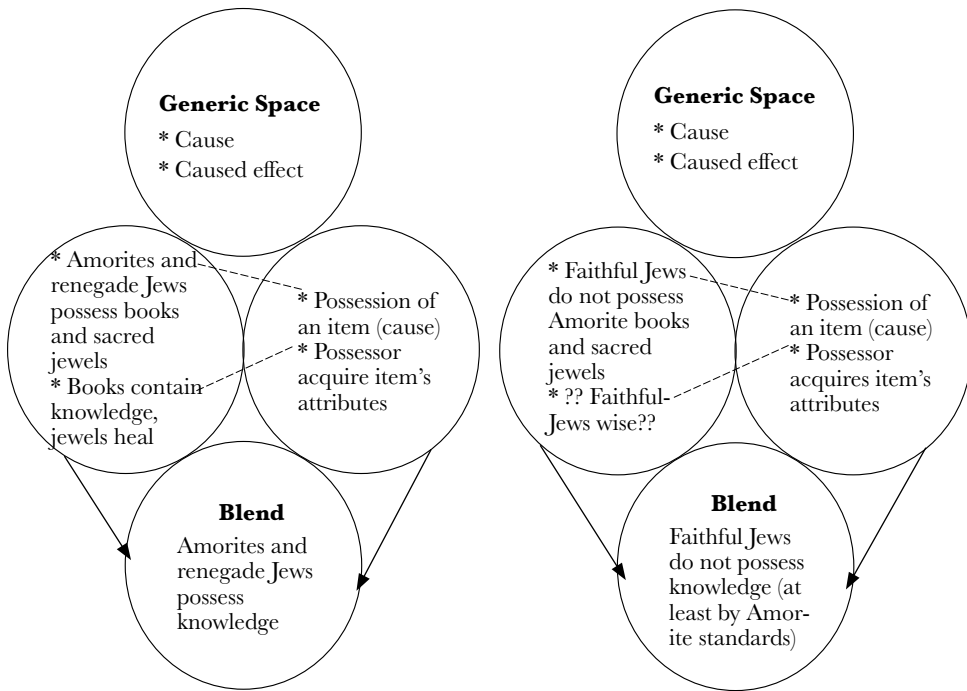
Likewise, *cognosco* is used to speak about knowledge of internal states (18:11, “I recognize that I have been persuaded by Balak,” *cognovi et per quod suasus sum a Balac*), judgment (35:4, “I recognize the sinfulness of my people,”... *cognoscens iniquitatem populi mei*), discovery (62:3, “from the time he recognized that you loved me,” *ex quo cognovit quoniam diligis me*), and future predictions (28:6, “so that all of you... may recognize the events foreordained,” *ut cognoscatis predestinates prophetationes omnes vos*). Pseudo-Philo seems to have preferred *cognosco* rather than *scio* for reference to physical identification (12:1, “upon seeing him they did not recognize him,” *videntes non cognoscebant eum*), and sexual contact (8:3, “Abraham knew Sarah,” *cognovit Abraham Saram*).

These small differences between the ranges of these two words may or may not have been evident or important to Pseudo-Philo’s audience. But throughout the Kenaz saga, which extends from *LAB* 25 through 28, only certain of these meanings are accentuated; that is, particular senses or frames are repeatedly activated.¹² Although *cognosco* and *scio* seem interchangeable, *scio* alone is used to speak of understanding or knowledge in Chapters 25 and 26. *Cognosco* is introduced into the story at Chapter 27, and the evoked meanings of the two verbs veer apart almost immediately.

In *LAB* 25 and 26, Kenaz has examined the people tribe by tribe to determine their sins. Some renegade Israelites have been studying Amorite sacred texts which predict the future, and using Amorite healing stones. God destroys these esoteric wisdom items after a discussion with Kenaz about their power and unique character; they are replaced by new stones, a gift from Israel’s God. These are stored in the ark along with the tablets of the covenant. But since no one disputed the power of the Amorite items, their loss is still a loss. The Jews will now never have those sacred materials as a resource.

The presence of these wisdom items has activated the following mental spaces, where possession of an item equates to possession of its properties.

¹² I am not going to attempt to analyze which is the “prototypical” meaning of either of these words; it suffices for our purposes to note that the text only prompts for certain meanings.



Counterfactual Blends: Who Has Knowledge?

Obviously, the blends¹³ resulting from the discovery of the sacred materials, and their subsequent disposal, have troubling implications. This, then, is at least one of the conceptual frames active as the reader begins Chapter 27: that Amorites and renegade Jews believe they possess knowledge to which faithful Jews do not have access.

The chapter opens as Kenaz is accused of idling while others fight the war. Kenaz, after slapping his enemies in jail, pulls together a small band of soldiers. The people, Kenaz says, should not “know” when the battle is going to take place. In actuality, no one but God knows when the battle will take place; Kenaz is waiting for reports from spies. Once those reports are received, Kenaz prays for victory, and says he will “know” from certain signs whether God is with him; in the same prayer, he “knows” that even if he dies (as a result of his sins) God will not destroy the nation. In these three instances, each use of knowing

¹³ The reasoning behind this particular configuration, where a situation is linked to an effect were directly caused, is explained in the prior chapter.

implies knowledge of a future event. The second and third explicitly claim the capacity to interpret God's behavior.

The Amorites claim to "know" the whereabouts of their sacred idols when in fact they don't know that God has had them taken away; in this situation, *scio* is used ironically. Kenaz "knows" the Amorites are cunning and acts accordingly; this knowledge allows him to anticipate the devious behavior of an Amorite and slay him. Finally, after testimony and signs, the people "know" that God does not need numbers to win: the people finally understand God's ways.

By the end of Chapter 27, the word *scio* has been repeatedly used to mean predictions of the future and knowledge of God's and others' internal states. The only use of "know" that differs from this is the ironic usage when the Amorites claim to "know" what happened to their idols, while the reader understands that they do not. The people don't "know" anything until after they bless God for making Kenaz their leader and acknowledge God's reliability.

"Knowing" contrasts with the local usage of "recognizing," which anyone can do, and apparently with accuracy—at least as far as it goes. Amorites are capable of recognizing Kenaz—they comprehend whose sword is in their midst, though they are gravely wrong when they try to interpret what this sign means. Kenaz's army apparently has the capacity to recognize what Kenaz has done, but doesn't. And the sinners who slandered Kenaz hope not to be recognized for their earlier sins, but they give themselves away. In each case, *cognosco* involves knowledge about other humans that is incomplete.

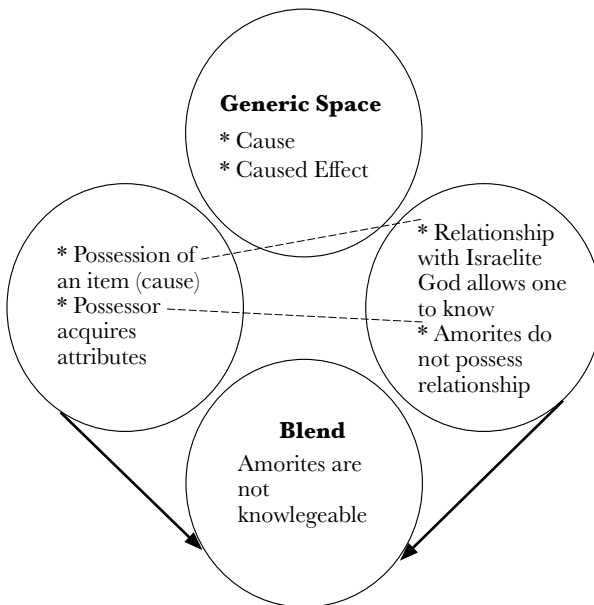
The meanings of *scio* and *cognosco* have not been changed. But the repeated invocation of certain frames for these words tends to keep those particular senses of the word active in the reader's consciousness.

In this context, those who "know" have the capacity to anticipate God's intentions and can foresee the future. Whether characters are capable of "knowing" appears to depend on their relationship with the God of Israel. Kenaz "knows" first when he is praying. The people don't "know" until they have acknowledged God's power. The Amorites never "know."

Throughout the Kenaz saga, "recognizing" is a wholly human endeavor, and is always partial. The wordplay sets up a distinction between knowledge that can be humanly acquired—"recognizing"—and knowledge that God grants—"knowing." It becomes easy to predict and contrast those who "know" with those who might "recognize" but not really know.

While these local meanings of *scio* and *cognosco* have been shifting, so too do the blends for wisdom. Because if Amorites are incapable of knowing either God's ways or the future, then they are incapable of knowing as it is locally defined. And knowing is central to wisdom.

The usage of *scio* and *cognosco* in this chapter serves to undercut the reputed importance of the Amorite sacred books and jewels found earlier in the story. The conclusion a reader could reach is that while the Amorites may have had esoteric books and precious items, they didn't "know" the truth and while they might "recognize" certain physical things, they were unable to predict what those things meant. True Israelites, those who acknowledge God's power and place their lives in God's hands, are much more knowledgeable than foreigners with esoteric books and precious items. This then would be the blend evoked by the end of Chapter 27:



Blend: Amorites Lack Knowledge of Israel's God and Are Thus Ignorant

This conceptual analysis shows how Alter's theory—that repetition indicates an attempt to draw the reader's attention—actually works as a prompt for a conceptual model. This model allows the mind to reason about not only the words and phrases repeated but about some larger mental space.

3.2.1 *Use and Non-use of Words*

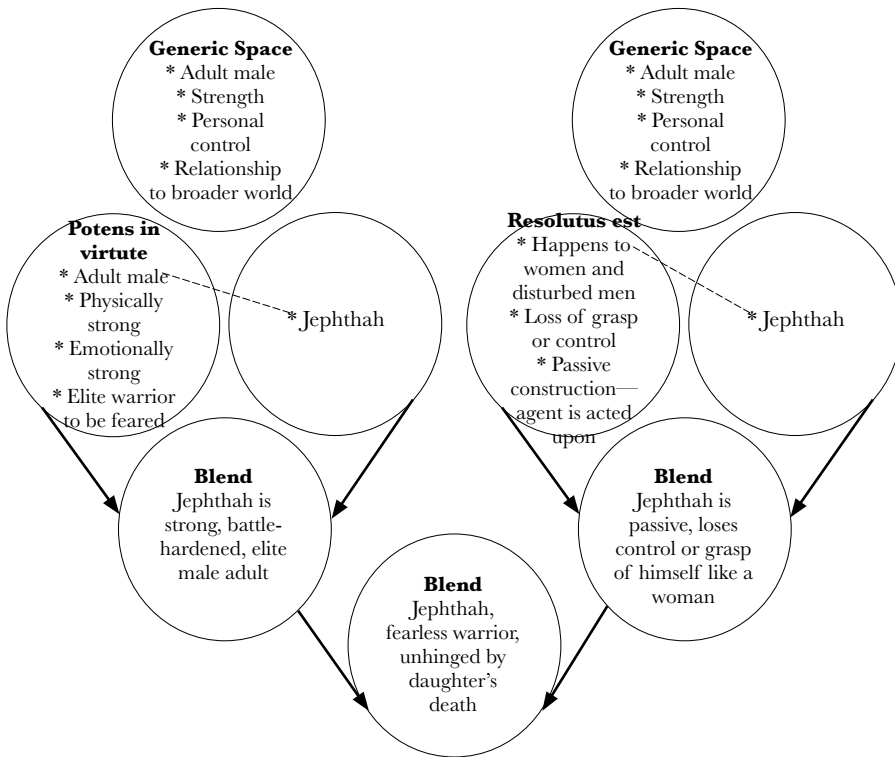
At other times, Alter says, because we hear so little specification in the narrative, the use or non-use of a particular word can be telling. One example of this can be found in Chapters 39 and 40, the story of Jephthah and his daughter Seila. In these Chapters, Jephthah is described only twice. At 39:2, he is called a valiant warrior (*erat potens in virtute*). In 40:1 when he realizes that his vow has condemned his first-born daughter to death, he is described as being unhinged (*resolutus est*).

The first description of Jephthah is a formulaic term which invokes a common cultural frame, that of the strong soldier.¹⁴ This term is used in Pseudo-Philo to describe the elite troops of a leader (6:7) as well as Joshua (23:1), and almost certainly is the translation of the biblical גבור חיל (mighty warrior). This culturally common frame evokes strength, valor, experience in war, and so on.

But the image of power and control is undermined by *resolvo*, the second description found in Chapter 40. The word *resolvo* is used three other times in Pseudo-Philo. In 27:11, Kenaz wishes to have his hand released from the sword (*resolveret manum suam*); in 54:6, the innards of the wife of Phinehas experience this when she finds that her husband has died (*resolute sunt omnia viscera eius*); and in 64:3, Saul feels this way about Saul's death and David's defection (*resolute sunt manus eius*).

This word, which carries a range of meaning from relax to release, indicates a release of grasp—either upon a sword, as Kenaz, or of one's body functions, or upon one's mind, as with Saul. In each example, the construction is passive. Pseudo-Philo portrays Jephthah as being the exact opposite of his daughter Seila, who displays courage in the face of his misbegotten vow. Seila is described as capable of thinking (*sen-satam*), having control of her faculties, at the same time that her father has lost his. The frame of *resolvo*, which includes not only its dictionary meaning but also the way it is used throughout Pseudo-Philo, serves as an input to help establish the character of Jephthah.

¹⁴ This is not only a biblical category but one that was common in Greek and Roman society.



Blend: Jephthah's complex character

The brave warrior of Chapter 39 comes to pieces in Chapter 40 when faced with the loss of his daughter. The combination of the two descriptions shades the portrait of Jephthah, adding pathos and perhaps a tinge of derisiveness to the characterization of this man who can kill in battle but is undone by the death of a girl. This nuance changes the reader's perception of Jephthah's character; the reader is faced with a more complex personality than if either of these two descriptions stood alone.

3.3 REPEATED ACTIONS, PARALLELS, AND ANALOGIES

Alter argues that actions such as recurrence, parallels, and analogy are important to developing the thematic argument of a narrative. He notes that, because of the parsimonious commentary in many biblical

stories, the only comment we may get on a particular action is a later analogy.¹⁵ As an example, he pairs Jacob's theft of the blessing from his blind father with the reversal later when he is deceived in the dark and takes Leah, rather than Rachel, as wife.

A cognitive analyst would agree with Alter and note that one does not analyze the actions—recurrences, parallels, analogous actions—themselves, but rather compares the actions, looking for relations between different action structures. A conceptual blending analysis of Jacob's theft and subsequent deception would categorize and link these two stories through shared cultural schemas as well as through vital relations. The tales share the vital relations of intentionality (of deception); property (of darkness/inability to see); analogy and disanalogy (one person substituted for another); similarity of schema (a person is cheated by a close relative into a more intimate or positive relationship than the person intended); identity (Jacob is a constant in these stories, though in one he is actor and in the other acted upon; there is also an ongoing question of mistaken identity); role (the dupe and the deceiver); and category (stories of deception).

Pseudo-Philo exhibits the same parsimony in its commentary as the biblical text. One would expect, therefore, that repetition, parallels, and analogy would be as important to understanding the narrative of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* as they are to understanding the biblical text.

Alter argues that when actions are repeated—such as the deflection of primogeniture in Genesis—these repetitions establish a pattern. If the pattern is decisive for biblical history, it achieves a kind of causal force. From a cognitive viewpoint, the causal force evoked by a sequence of events is the result of blending that particular sequence with the input—culturally accepted and virtually unconscious—that when one action precedes another, it causes the other.¹⁶

Repetition can be mapped in conceptual blending. I would again turn to modern understandings of category outlined in chapter 2. But instead of a prototypical category, where there is a member or members who constitute a “best fit”, the repetition of scenes constitute a radial category, that is, a category with a skeletal central case and variations

¹⁵ Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 45.

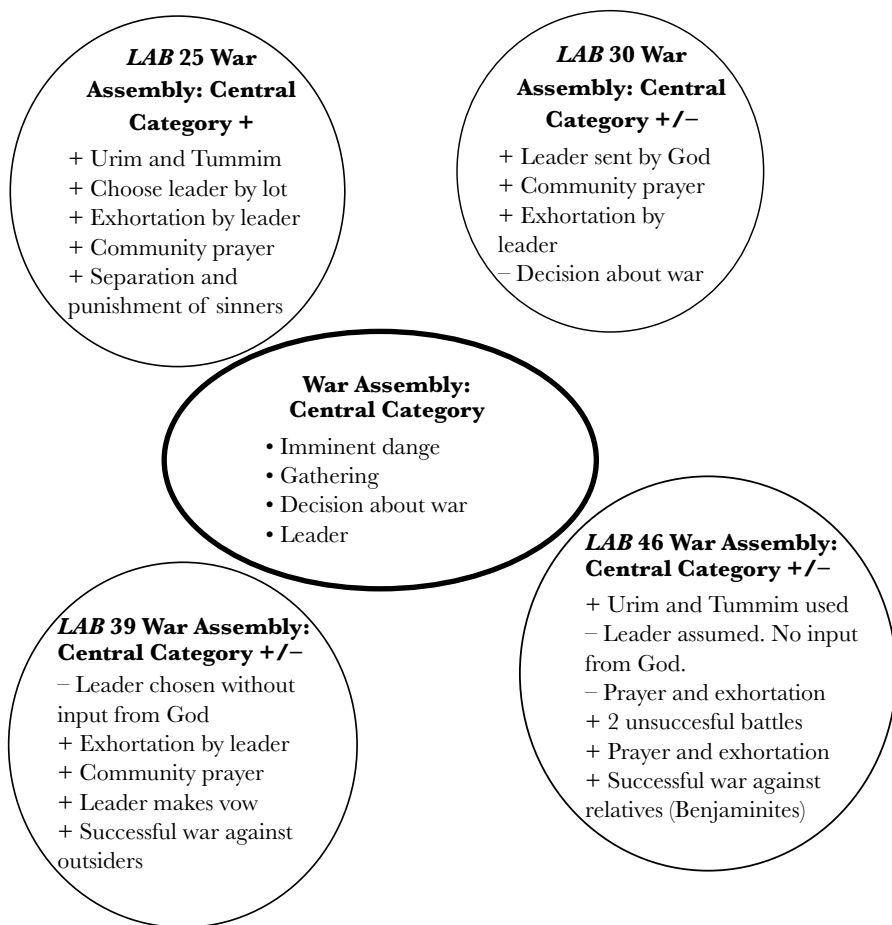
¹⁶ If I hit my leg and it stings, I say that the slap caused the sting. In like manner, if I turn up the dial on the thermostat and the house gets warm, I say my action caused the warmth. But in reality the heat resulted from a long and complex interaction involving physical movement, electrical impulse, combustion, movement of air, etc.

on that case. As noted earlier, it is likely that no single example will match the central case perfectly, but the central case will be deducible from the combination of all the examples. Once a category is established, one is then able to make judgments about individual cases. The presence or lack of a standard attribute (analogy or disanalogy), or the addition of a new attribute, may then be experienced as causal. If X always precedes Y, but in a certain case there is no X, we would expect no Y. X is experienced as causal for Y.

One example of a repeated action in Pseudo-Philo is what I would call "war assemblies." There are four different examples of such assemblies, in Chapters 25, 30, 39, and 46. The skeletal central category for war assemblies would include these constants: they are assemblies called for the community of Israel; the community has some reason to feel that they are in imminent danger; there is some kind of military leader appointed; the community decides whether, and how, they should engage in a war. Because these kinds of assemblies happen regularly when the community is threatened, even the notice that Israel is being badgered by foreigners is enough to call up the rich fabric of the "war assembly" frame.

In *LAB* 25, the people gather because they are under pressure from the Philistines. The assembly begins with inquiry of God (though the Urim and Tummim aren't mentioned, it is reasonable to assume that they were used). Quickly the focus changes from whether Israel should go to war to how to make the community ready for war. A leader must be chosen and the impure members must be purged. Kenaz is chosen by lot, and speaks to the community about their sinfulness and God's promises. The tribes are examined by lot, and various members are burned after confessing to sins. Only several chapters later does war actually occur, and it's against the Amorites, not the Philistines. In the end, only Kenaz actually engages the enemy in battle. The war is successful.

In the second assembly, *LAB* 30, Deborah emerges as leader. No lots are cast to choose her: she is, instead, sent by God to a people who are fasting and praying because they are conscious of their own sinfulness and the oppression it has brought upon them. No lots are cast to decide whether to go to war, nor are the Urim and Tummim consulted. Deborah castigates the community in a covenantal speech and then the community, with divine assistance, wins their war against Jabin of Hazor.



In *LAB 39*, again, no lots are cast. Jephthah appears to be chosen without divine consultation or intervention. There is community prayer, and Jephthah gives a short homily on Israel's failure to keep the law. He also makes a personal vow. The war against the Ammonites is successful (though God is careful to divorce the victory from Jephthah's vow-making).

In the war against the Benjaminites, *LAB 46*, the Urim and Tummin are consulted, but the question is not, "Should we go to war?" but "Will God deliver our brothers into our hands?" There is no mention of choosing a leader, and neither community prayer nor covenantal exhortation is offered until after the second defeat. Only after losing

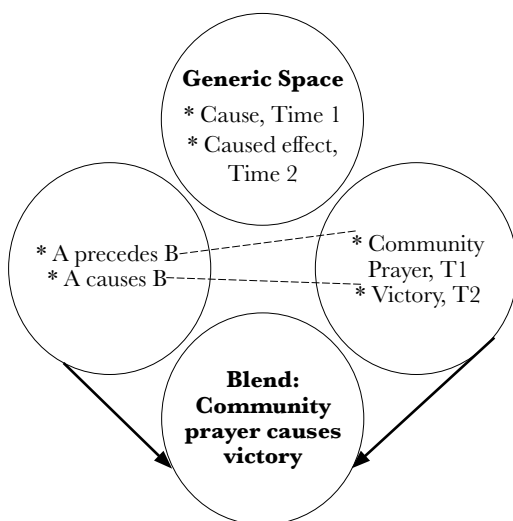
twice do the people, in despair, begin to pray, and Phinehas petitions God on their behalf. God instructs Phinehas to chastise the community for their sins, which he does; then they defeat the Benjaminites.

These repeated assemblies before war constitute a radial category. None of these examples *are* the central model, but the central model may be deduced from them. It is a skeletal structure, including imminent danger, a decision about war, and appointment of a military leader.

Cognitively we recognize the four different assemblies as belonging to the same frame, even though every example does not share every attribute. And not only do we feel that they form a category: we can even feel that lack of an attribute, such as community prayer or admonitory address, can have causative consequences. Because radial categories provide a cognitive framework and enable us to reason about events that take place at different times, these examples lead us to think that wars can be won even with leaders who were not selected by God, but a *successful* war assembly must include prayer and exhortation. An assembly prior to war must have certain components or the battle will not be won. Only those assemblies where a leader reminds Israel of their pitiful record of obedience to the covenant promises and the people exhibit repentance result in victory. Should the people neglect contrition and prayer, as in Chapter 46, the frame leads us to reason that their defeat is their own fault.¹⁷ Such reasoning is the result of the following common blend, which employs an input about causality of which we are normally unconscious.

Again, this analysis shows how Alter's focus on repeated action functions conceptually. Alter's assumption that repetition establishes a pattern that can achieve causal force is demonstrated convincingly when one analyzes the repetitions as variations on a central conceptual category, and looks closely at the way that cause and effect can be interjected into a series of events that happens in sequence.

¹⁷ Two remarks by God underscore this conclusion. In 39:11, God declares that he will give Israel victory because of the people's prayer rather than the leader's vow. Likewise, the message God sends through Phinehas in Chapter 46 asserts that Israel should have repented and started praying long ago.



Blend: Causality Ascribed to Preceding Action

3.3.1 *Type Scenes*

Type-scenes, Alter holds, are a “central organizing convention of biblical narrative”:¹⁸ he defines type-scenes as two or more versions of the same action or the same situation, with variations in characters or the like, occurring in different parts of the narrative. For Alter, the repetition of a particular incident—like the “danger to the matriarch” episodes in the Abraham narrative—is viewed through a literary lens rather than dismissed as evidence of duplicate sources. These repetitious episodes are part of a hero’s life story, and are “dependent on the manipulation of a fixed constellation of predetermined motifs.”¹⁹ By looking closely at the changes—sometimes minute—between type scenes, one can identify a vast and complex network of connections and meaning.

But the point of a type-scene is not merely the pleasure of a good variation, or the ceremonial marking of a certain kind of event. It is, as Alter says, a way to attach a particular scene to a larger framework which has theological importance. It serves “to reproduce in narrative the recurrent rhythm of a divinely appointed destiny in Israelite his-

¹⁸ Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 181.

¹⁹ Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 51.

tory.”²⁰ While the repetition of a type-scene within a character's life is a way of showing insight, the presence of a particular type scene in a character's life helps us to connect them to the broader story and gain insight into that larger world.

Alter seems to distinguish between type-scenes and repeated actions. This stance appears to be motivated by the desire to refute source critics, who allege that two versions of the same story in a single character's life only mean that different sources were used. Alter's type-scene theory argues, alternatively, that the repetition of an episode is not just an artifact of multiple sources but is meant to advance the story in some way.

Conceptual blending would speak of the vital relations between inputs that allow humans to make meaning and connections between disparate events. If, as in the example of “war assemblies,” type-scenes represent a radial category, then they provide readers with a complex framework with which to reason.²¹ Type-scenes are more complex conceptual frames than repeated words or actions, but the basic structure remains the same. Both repeated actions and type-scenes constitute a frame. The cognitive work in uncovering meaning from a type-scene may vary in complexity and extent but not in essentials from a simpler frame such as “war assembly.”

However, because type-scenes are so highly entrenched, the occurrence of a single part of the type-scene results in the cognitive retrieval of the entire frame. Type-scenes are not merely literary mechanisms; they are first and foremost conceptual mechanisms, and their presence alerts a reader to activate a conceptual frame. When reasoning with type-scenes, because the mental frame is so entrenched, additions and deletions are even more important.²²

²⁰ Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 60.

²¹ Viewing testaments, e.g., as radial categories frees one from the tyranny of deciding whether or not a given text meets a set group of criteria. J. J. Collins, on page 326 of his article “Testaments” in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period* (ed. Michael E. Stone; Assen & Philadelphia: Van Gorcum & Fortress Press, 1984), argues that a text must have a historical review of the character's life, an ethical exhortation, and a prediction of the future in order to fit the genre of testament. Based on these criteria, he eliminates *The Testament of Abraham* because it does not contain a farewell discourse. However, viewed as a type-scene or radial category, the absence of farewell discourse doesn't mean that this text fails as a testament; it merely means that the author wished to make some point by leaving out the central feature of a patriarch's dying scene.

²² For instance, a modern type-scene might be a Protestant church service. In this highly structured frame, a single incident can evoke a complete and complex set of

An analysis of the type-scene “last testament”, found in both the Bible and *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, can illustrate how the conceptual blend is structured. Looking at eight “last testament” opportunities in *LAB* may help to make the parameters of the category clearer: Moses in Chapter 19, Joshua in Chapter 24, Kenaz in Chapter 28, Deborah in Chapter 33, Gideon in Chapter 36, Jair in Chapter 38, Seila and Jephthath in Chapter 40, and Saul in Chapter 65.

Based on the first four testaments, which are clearly marked as such in the text, I would propose the following skeletal structure for the central category of “last testament”: there is a prominent male leader, who gathers the people together to publicly announce his death. He delivers an exhortation to the people to obey the law and follow the covenant. His speech references some incident or saying for which he is well known, and reveals knowledge of the other world. He is interrupted by the weeping people. After death, he is laid with his fathers, and mourned.

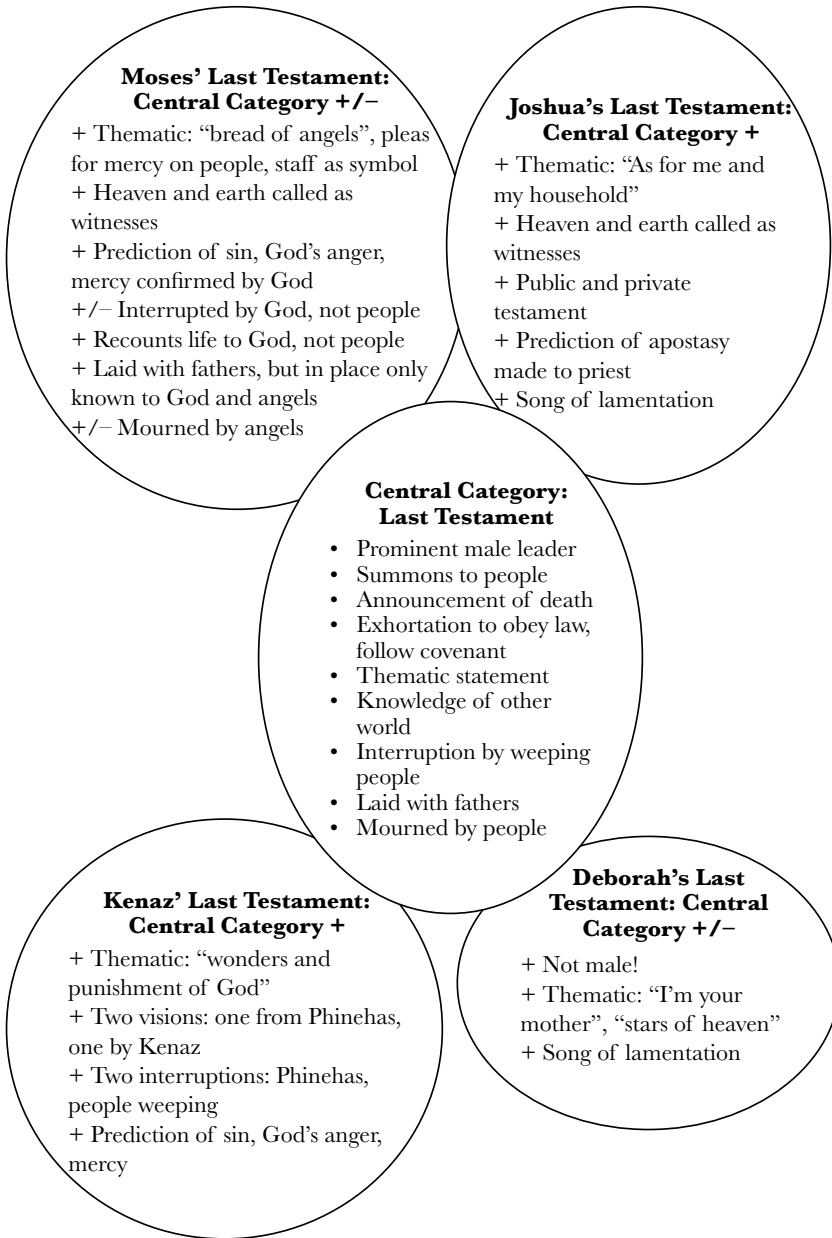
Each of the four “traditional” testaments contain the elements of the central category, but with variations (Moses is interrupted by God rather than the people; the teaching about human sin and God’s anger comes through Phinehas’ speech in the middle of Kenaz’s testament; Deborah and Joshua have no visions but still teach other-worldly knowledge; Kenaz has a vision but can’t remember it; Moses has a vision but tells no one.) Moses’ testament has a lacuna at the beginning, so we don’t know if he actually summoned the people (as do all the others) but every commentator assumes that he has: this is the strength of a central category, or type-scene, if you will.

As mental spaces, connections come through role (leader), category (death scene, gathering), property (maleness), part-whole (the theme stands for entirety of leader’s teaching), time (end of life), and similarity (of content, interruption), and so on.

Each of the four leaders gives the people a message, but it is a message couched in terms that remind the reader of the original biblical story about that leader.²³ Moses speaks of calling heaven and earth to witness against the people (*Ego autem hodie testor vobis celum et terram*) in

relations including categories of events (e.g., a call to worship, communion, sermon, and hymns); roles (e.g., preacher, choir, congregation, organist); space (e.g., a church sanctuary, a school chapel); time (e.g., Sunday morning, Wednesday evening) and so on. A departure from the frame—for instance, the lack of a sermon—will strike the reader as important. For more on frames, see Chapter Two.

²³ Except, of course, Kenaz, who has no biblical story, just a name.



echo of Deuteronomy 4:26, where biblical Moses tells the people that they will lose the land if they follow idols. And he reminds the people of the commitment they made in the desert, at Exodus 24, where twice they heard the law and agreed to it.

Joshua's message to the community incorporates his signature statement from Joshua 24:15, about the choice that he makes for himself and his household, to serve the Lord. Joshua's testament also mentions sending people back to their own portions, *hereditatem suam*, (and later, tents, *tabernaculum suum*), in remembrance of Joshua's distribution of the land.

The testament of Kenaz has a harder time incorporating biblically thematic material, naturally, since the narrative is entirely new with Pseudo-Philo. There are two interesting ways that the author deals with this. First, many parts of the Kenaz saga thematically resemble biblical stories involving other characters: the burning of Achan in Joshua 7 prefigures LAB 25, and Gideon's victory in Judges 7 shares many points of contact with LAB 27. Pseudo-Philo treats Chapter 25 as the defining moment of Kenaz' career, in that his last testament references the burning of the sinners and reframes it as a wonder of God (in line with the theological reframing Kenaz has engaged in throughout his leadership.)

But the majority of Kenaz's testament is taken up with Phinehas' recital of a dream from his father. The effect of this is to paint Kenaz once more as humble and self-effacing—so self-effacing that he doesn't even provide the instruction in his own testament! This technique also serves to provide a biblically authorized instruction, by putting it in the mouth of a known priest. (See section on direct speech below.)

Deborah also presents a challenge to Pseudo-Philo. As a woman, she does not fit the first criteria in the skeletal category; but as a leader, she does. So the text uses the customary formulaic opening, with notice of impending death and her order to assemble the people; and closes with the formulaic closing, about being laid with her fathers and being mourned, and throws in a lamentation song for good measure. These framing devices are so standard that there can be no question that what sits between them is intended as a testament.

After the customary opening, Deborah begins with a reference to her gender and role as mother to Israel, a role given her in Judges 5, the song of Deborah. The thematic reference comes from the song of Deborah: Pseudo-Philo has her remind the people of the stars made manifest among them, an allusion to God's movement of the heavens during the battle with Sisera.

The above show how each of the testaments differs from the central example, but are still recognizable as testaments. If, however, we believe that this central category lives on as a conceptual blend, available for reasoning, then it can be applied to situations where most of the skeletal

criteria are missing, and still allow us to do some reasoning about those cases. It is only when our blends go too far afield that the application of the frame is experienced as arbitrary or fantastic.

Analyzing the deaths of Jephthah and Seila, Gideon, Jair and Saul in light of the last testament category provides interesting insights into these passages.

Jephthah, in the Bible, is buried in his hometown of Gilead a full chapter after the death of his daughter, and he dies sans testament. But Pseudo-Philo moves Jephthah's death to follow immediately upon that of his daughter Seila in the narrative. Jephthah still gives no final testament, but Seila's speech to her father and her lamentation in the mountains both contain important elements of a last testament: the exhortation to remember Abraham and Isaac's willingness to obey God, and the thematic prayer that her life will keep other fathers from sacrificing their daughters. God's observation of her outstanding wisdom, and God's prediction that she will depart into the bosom of her mothers, interrupts her grieving process on the mountain. There is an announcement of death, the gathering of "all the virgins of Israel" (*omnes virgines Israel convenerunt*) to bury her, and the annual weeping for four days in her honor. And after her death, Jephthah is buried (*sepultus*) with his fathers. Between the two of them, Seila and her father have virtually all of the makings of a last testament.²⁴

Gideon has no testament in the biblical story, nor does he in Pseudo-Philo's recounting. But when he sins, Pseudo-Philo's God promptly decides that he will deal with it after Gideon's death at a "good old age," *senectute bona*. The report of Gideon's death at a "good old age" follows immediately.²⁵ In the biblical tale, he lies with his fathers; in Pseudo-Philo, he is "buried in his own city", *sepultus est in vilitate sua*. No mention is made of being laid with his fathers. Can one infer from this that a person is only accorded the joy of being laid with his fathers if he was faithful during his life? Is this missing reference a hint as to God's intended punishment—separation from the fathers in the afterlife?

Jair has the opposite of a last testament; instead, he has a last condemnation. The biblical Jair is no villain, unlike the *LAB* version. Nor does he recite a last testament. But in Chapter 38, after Jair condemns

²⁴ Although as Antoinette Wire has pointed out (personal correspondence), there is a great deal of contrast between these two. Seila has a full testament. Jephthah, at least at the end of his life, fades away; any testamentary trope for him is merely vestigial.

²⁵ Setting one's mind at rest about how a bad person can live a long and joyful life—the answer is, only when God intends it for God's own purposes.

seven devout men to the fire for refusing to worship Baal, he himself is burned up. As he is dying, instead of giving a word about keeping the covenant and God's anger, he is instead lectured by an angel about God's anger at his corruption of the covenant. A prophecy is recited over him, and otherworldly knowledge is given about the fate of the faithful who were burned (they are quickened and live again) and himself (he'll burn forever). Jair is condemned to a thematic, measure-for-measure punishment; burning in eternal fire, he prefigures the fate of apostates. There is no prediction of corruption and abandonment of the covenant because it's already happened. No mention is made of where his body rests, if anywhere. No one mourns him. This is, in effect, an anti-testament; evil men not only don't get to have their final say, they are subjected to other's say. Their bodies lie anonymous and alone after death.

Finally, we turn to Saul. Wounded on the battlefield, he requests a speedy dispatch so that he won't be tortured. No community surrounds him to hear these last words. But there is an interruption: he postpones his execution in order to inquire the name of the man who is going to kill him. Learning that he is Edabus, son of Agag, Saul confirms Samuel's prediction regarding Agag's offspring. This calls to mind 1 Samuel 15, where God rejects Saul as king because he kept Agag and booty from the Amalekites. Transgression of the law is severely enforced. This thematic note being sounded with a quote from Samuel, Saul uses his last breath to make a request. He asks his killer tell David two things: that Saul has been killed by his enemy, Edabus, and that Saul begs David not to remember his hatred and injustice. No mention of his burial is made. If this would be Saul's last testament, it contains thematic material and an interruption, but instead of providing instruction Saul begs for forgiveness.

If last testaments constitute a radial category, then there are a number of things we can "deduct" from applying the central case to these last stories, which are clearly *not* last testaments. A central case, or type-scene, suggests an immense trove of knowledge with just a few words, and the announcement of a death scene automatically lends itself to comparison with the features of the central case. That comparison could lead one to deduce that being laid with one's fathers after death is a pleasure granted only to those leaders who revere God. Or that Jephthah and his daughter Seila together might have made a fine leader, but neither had the material on their own. Or one might think that sinning seriously during one's life means one will not be disciplining one's community on one's death bed, but rather be the recipient of such chastisement

and direction. Finally, a reader could reason that one's death will likely reflect one's life. Whatever prominent evil a person performed while alive will be echoed somehow in that person's dying, just as prominent goodness will be echoed in the testament of a good man.

The richness of the type-scene frame allows a reader to reason even in situations where there are very few points of contact with the category "last testament" except imminent death. This reasoning is possible because type-scenes constitute hardy and rich central categories which are widely available in the culture.

Earlier in this section I referenced the possibility that one could go "too far afield" in the use of a conceptual frame, and experience the resulting blend as bizarre or meaningless. Just what constitutes going "too far afield" is, of course, a subjective judgment. But surely one could claim that once a conceptual construct is activated, it is available for consideration. Its use as a reasoning tool will depend on how culturally common the construct is. For example, the mere mention of the name "Dorothy" can be enough to awaken the entire story of the Wizard of Oz, including selections of music, visions of flying monkeys, and scurrilous references to Kansas and dogs.²⁶

The conceptual category "last testament" was strong enough to have spawned a tradition that included, among other things, "The Last Testaments of the Patriarchs." While dating of *LAB* is difficult, it does not seem fantastic to imagine that these last, odd death scenes from *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* would have been viewed as deviations from a well-known last testament central category and that the variations would be fruitful for pondering the probable demise awaiting those who did not follow God's instructions during their lives.

3.4 DIALOGUE: DIRECT, PROPHETIC, AND REPORTED SPEECH

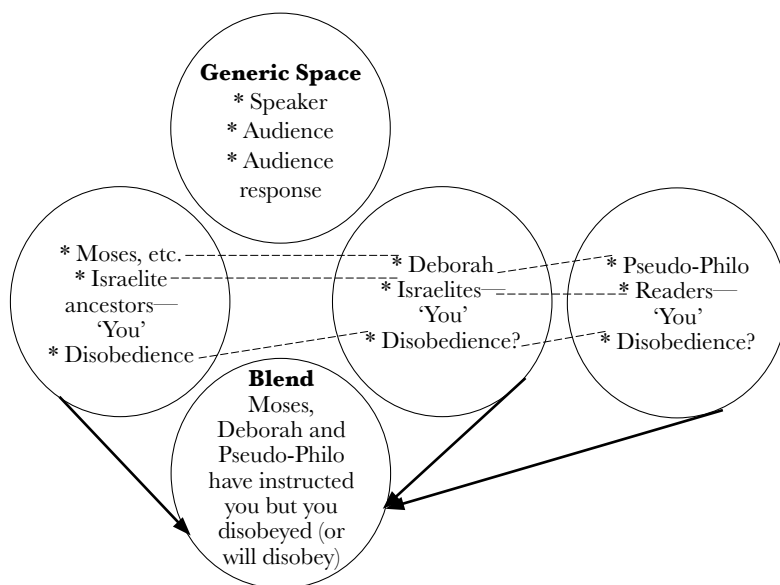
Robert Alter has argued that dialogue, rather than narrative, is used for the most important parts of the Hebrew Bible. Not only are thoughts normally rendered as if they were speech, but even oracles are presented, improbably, in dialogue form. Formal resemblance between speech and thought even extends to similar introductory frameworks: "he said" prefaces internal thought as well as statements to other char-

²⁶ In a middle-aged person raised in the middle class of the United States in the last half of the 20th century.

acters.²⁷ Direct speech, Alter argues, serves to bring “the speech-act into the foreground, making us keenly aware of (the speaker) as a figure addressing (his or her audience) and using language both to produce a certain effect on them and to define (the speaker’s) relationship to (another character).”²⁸

3.4.1 *Direct Speech*

While Alter speaks of the audience in the text and how the speech-act makes the reader attentive to the effect on them, I would argue that presenting a story primarily in direct speech also has a certain effect upon the reader. When Deborah says in Chapter 30, “Moses and Joshua and Kenaz and Zebul commanded you, but you did not obey them”, we the readers are presented with a blend that incorporates not only the audience in the story but ourselves. The second-person pronoun establishes a blend whereby the reader is included in the target audience; Deborah speaks to the community of ancient Israel, but the reader also finds herself or himself addressed.



The Reader is Blended with the Audience in the Text

²⁷ See, for instance, Sisera in 31:3.

²⁸ Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 67.

In this multi-scope blend, Moses and the prophets are compressed with Deborah, who is speaking in the text, and with Pseudo-Philo who is presenting the story. The audience for Moses is ancient Israel; for Deborah, Israel in Deborah's time; and for Pseudo-Philo, the ancient (as well as the present) reader of Pseudo-Philo. The action under consideration is disobedience or future disobedience. Usage of the second person involves the reader as audience—disobedient audience. Unless this blend is too fantastic for the reader—and it's certainly not intended to be—the censure holds.

A reader is drawn into and engaged by direct speech because direct speech is cognitively constructed to involve the reader. Direct speech in a text mimics the blends of direct speech in life, and since humans tend to "live in the blend" unless the blend is problematic, most people reading direct speech are at least partially engaged.²⁹

3.4.2 *Prophetic Speech*

But direct speech is not just effective because it involves the reader as audience. There are other blends evoked when, for instance, a leader gives the community instruction in the name of God. Every time a character speaks prophetically and argues that God wants the people to behave in a certain way, that speech brings into play the framework of an eyewitness.

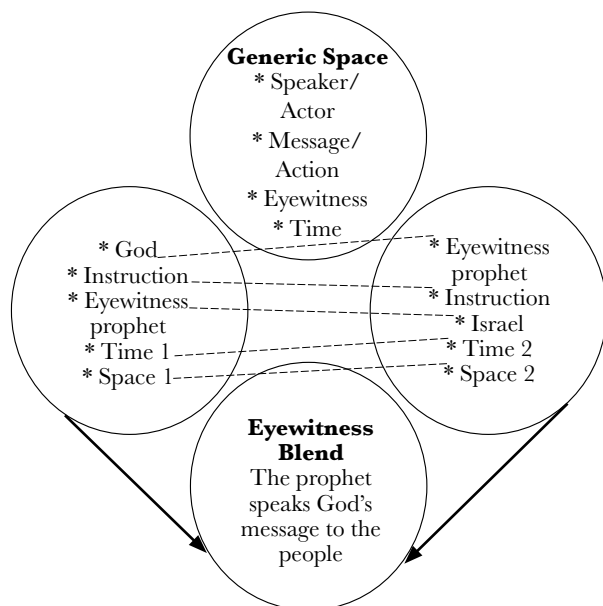
In any situation of prophecy, it is assumed that the prophet was present and heard God actually speak the words that he or she later reports to the people. When Joshua says, "So says the Lord", the reader assumes that Joshua heard God talk. Sometimes the claim to direct knowledge is explicit—as in Ezekiel 2—and sometimes it is assumed. We will begin by analyzing how a cognitive blend where eyewitness knowledge is explicitly claimed should be understood.

²⁹ Alter advances a number of other arguments about how direct speech functions in the biblical text. For instance, he holds that direct speech reveals character. This rests, in part, on the biblical practice of having only two characters speaking in any given scene (or one character and a group). When only two characters are present, their word choice, tempo, tendency to brevity or verbosity and the like are often contrasted in order to accentuate the differences between them. While *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* observes the biblical stylistic of only two characters speaking, the variation between speech patterns is virtually non-existent. Every character in Pseudo-Philo is verbose.

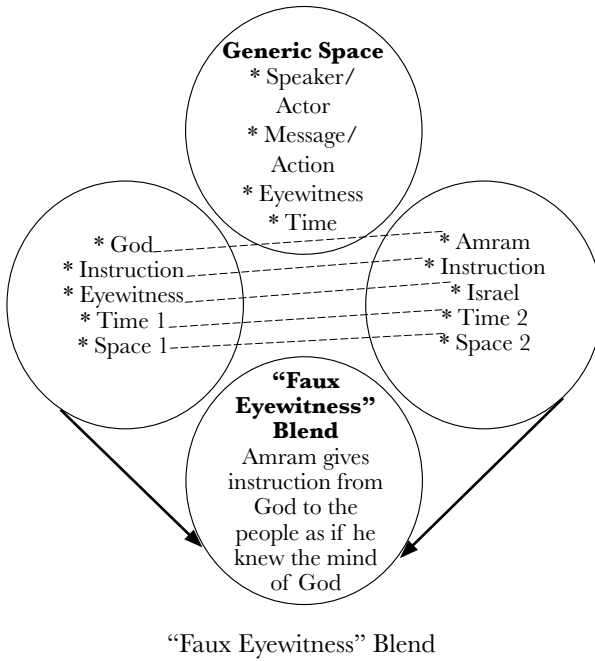
The prophet achieves authority as the result of two different compressions. The first is the compression between God and the prophet in the blend, where they both fulfill the role of the speaker. But the second compression comes from the prophet's presence at the original event—the fact that the prophet serves as a witness to God's very words and deeds.

In the eyewitness blend, there is compression across speakers, message and audiences. The prophet and God both fill the role of speaker in the different inputs, and the prophet speaks for God in the blend. The instruction/admonition is assumed to be the same in both inputs and hence remains intact in the blend. The audience, which in one input is the prophet and in the other Israel, becomes the community Israel in the blend. The time and the space in which the original revelation occurred are compressed with the time and space in which the prophet is speaking.

Interestingly, the prophet is present in both inputs in this blend, but fills different roles in them. This gives the prophet legitimacy as a witness: how else could he know what God said if he was not present?



Blend of Eyewitness Prophecy



This eyewitness frame can be exploited to accrue authority whenever a character reports an action or message. Since the assumption is that the reporter was present at the original event (unless it is noted differently), the one reporting is credited with the authority of an eyewitness in the blend; that is, with providing an accurate representation of God's intent or message. Thus, when Amram says, “For God will not continue in his anger...” the reader automatically and unconsciously uses the eyewitness blend, even though Amram makes no claim to have been present or to have heard directly from God about the subject he is addressing.

Once the blend is established for eyewitness prophecy, it is cognitively available for unconscious (and, of course, conscious) use. Whenever an individual instructs or admonishes the community of Israel in the name of God, it is possible to activate the blend, whether the situation be an actual eyewitness experience or a “faux eyewitness” experience.³⁰

³⁰ I use “faux” because it is not always clear whether the character is intended to be claiming access to God's words and deeds or just citing scripture in a particularly authoritative way. Calling these blends “faux eyewitness” need not imply that there is any intent to deceive on the part of the author; merely that the question of access is not addressed.

To speak God's word is to accrue the authority, honor, and status of a prophet unless there is a conflicting picture presented by the text.³¹

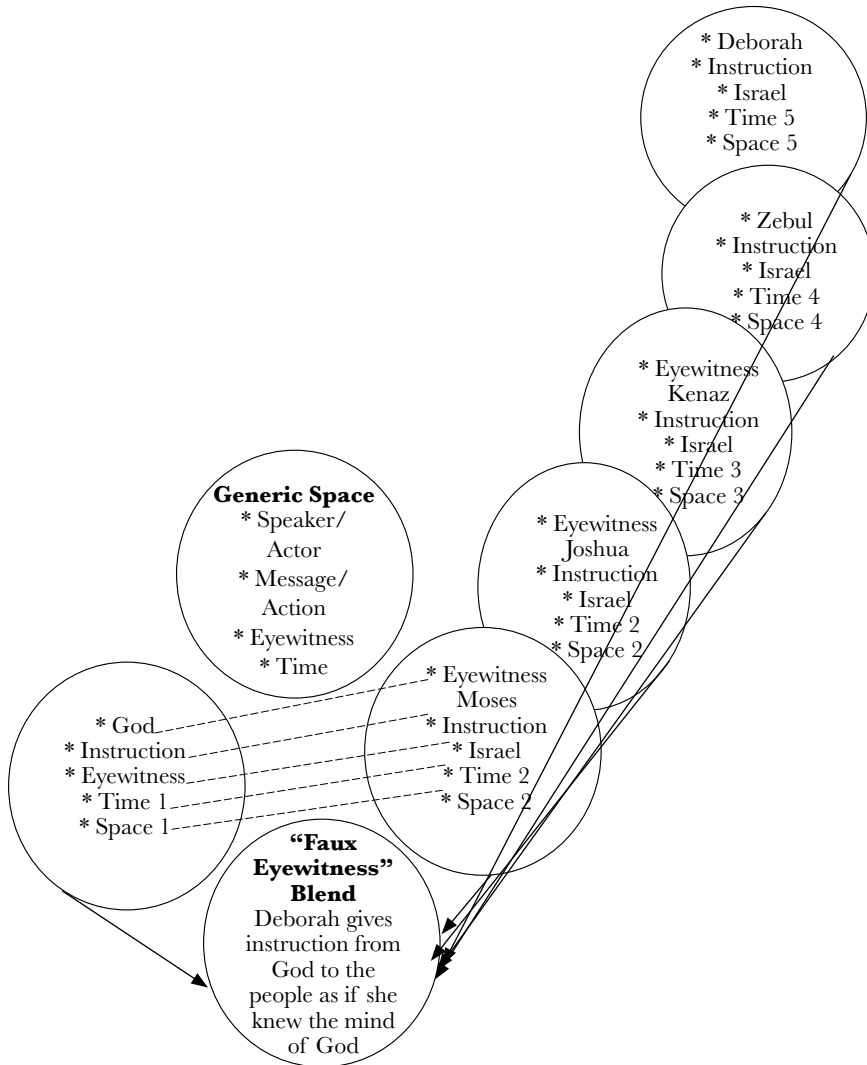
The sequence that makes such a conclusion possible is ubiquitous in everyday life. For instance, the veterinary assistant, Pat, calls to tell me that the dog's blood sugar is elevated. Actually, Pat never saw the test, but was told to call me by the veterinarian, who performed the test and read the results. The eyewitness told Pat, Pat told me: I blend Pat's recounting with the eyewitness account and believe him.³²

The trigger for the prophetic or leader's frame ("faux eyewitness") in *LAB* is not usually the claim that God has spoken to the character. In actuality, there are only a handful of instances when someone says that they have heard directly from God, although there are numerous examples of God speaking. More often, a leader invokes this frame by reminding the community of what God has done and said in the past.

Frequently in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, the eyewitness frame is brought into play by citing another prophet, as when Deborah says, "Moses and Joshua and Kenaz and Zebul commanded you, and you did not obey them." With this statement, Deborah is blending herself with these earlier leaders, who are already blended with God as eyewitnesses. Moses, Joshua, and Kenaz are specifically noted to have spoken with God, while no such specificity is accorded Zebul and Deborah. This kind of listing piles up the input spaces, resulting in a multiple blend. The overall effect is to present Deborah's assertion cognitively blended with the teachings of all of these leaders and prophets as well as God's own voice. (This phenomenon will be addressed in more depth in the following section, **Rhetoric Through A Cognitive Lens**.)

³¹ And, as noted before, if gaps and conflicts are observed in the presentation of a given personage as a prophetic figure, these may be instructive in assessing his or her character. One such conflicting picture is presented in *LAB* 18, which retells the story of Balaam. At intervals during his prophetic speech to Balak, both his speech and narrative interruptions reveal that though he is prophetic and can speak about God's intent for Moab, he does so problematically. At one point the narrator tells us, "He did not know that his spirit was puffed up so as to hasten his own destruction," and at another Balaam says, "There is little left of the holy spirit that abides in me."

³² Of course, the eyewitness is no such thing, since the test itself measures blood glucose levels and presents that data via a blend—a numerical reading—for interpretation by the veterinarian.



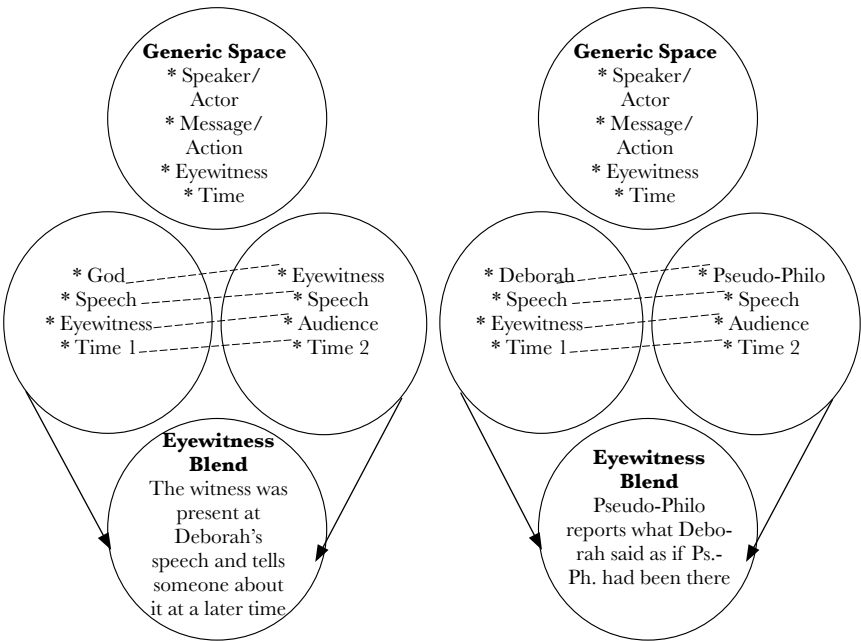
Multiple Eyewitnesses in "Faux Eyewitness" Blend

3.4.3 *Reported Speech*

There is one final way in which direct speech works cognitively in a text. Direct speech, which quotes God or prophets or leaders, builds up the authority of the character making the speech. But it also serves to build up the status of the one reporting the direct speech. Since we are encouraged to hear disquisition, cogitation, and oracle as if it were

all verbal and we ourselves were witnesses to it, the cognitive blend for direct speech also serves to present the narrator as an accurate and all-knowing eye- (or ear-) witness to the words and events recounted.

We have already explored the blend for an eyewitness report. In the following two diagrams, the left side represents an eyewitness present at a speech by Deborah. The right side represents Pseudo-Philo’s presentation of Deborah’s speech. As before, the eyewitness blend is presumed to be cognitively, but unconsciously, invoked. For the most part, humans tend to “live in the blend”—accept the compression of eyewitness and reporter—unless the blend invoked is so unfamiliar or dubious that the blend becomes conscious and arouses scrutiny.



Narration as a Form of Eyewitness Blend

Once the blend which compresses eyewitness and narrator is active, the narrator gains a tremendous amount of authority. The narrator, without having to make any direct claim, is able to present the text as if he had access to the innermost thoughts of every character, including God. Events in the story are told as if the narrator were present at all of them, and could always recount what was said accurately, whether

in a secret meeting or community assembly. This eyewitness narrator knows what's going to happen in the future, and is able to judge what in the past pertains to the present situation. The narrator knows as much as the character God. In light of this blend, the narrator has superior access to any and all of the leaders and prophetic figures in Pseudo-Philo.

3.5 NARRATIVE

Alter argues that biblical narrative melds not only omniscience but also unobtrusiveness.³³ The biblical narrator, he says, is generally laconic, declining to comment upon or explain the things that he is speaking about. This general reticence implies that the narrator has comprehensive knowledge and that the reader's knowledge is fragmentary in comparison.

Most of the time the narrator remains hidden from our view. But Alter points out that there are times when the narrator steps forward, so to speak, and inserts a comment or a summary. Because the narrator intrudes so seldom, Alter holds that we should pay attention when it happens. These interruptions are "purposefully selective."³⁴

Narrative interruptions generally fall into three different functional categories: to **convey information necessary** to the story which would be difficult to explicate in direct speech; to impart **supplemental information** which is not strictly necessary for the plot; and to **mirror, confirm, undermine, or focus attention on statements** made in direct discourse.³⁵

3.5.1 *Exposition*

In the first functional category is found **narrative that provides expository information**. Pseudo-Philo often mimics the biblical text by beginning or ending a chapter with formulaic narrative.³⁶ Sometimes it is an announcement of the status of Israel—whether the land had

³³ Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 183.

³⁴ Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 184.

³⁵ Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 76–77.

³⁶ This construction is, at some level, a conscious construction, as the author uses biblical formula repeatedly. One need not know how the cognitive blends function in order to use blends effectively.

peace, the people had a leader, Israel's relationship with God, and who was oppressing them. Other times a chapter begins with the name of the main character, situates him or her geographically, mentions important family relationships and makes some moral judgment. While this is not true for every leader—Deborah arrives on the scene in Chapter 30 with no introduction at all—the reader finds such a standard frame present in the story of Jephthah and Gideon, for instance. And a favorite and oft used ending for chapters in Pseudo-Philo is the notice that someone died, where he was laid, and how long he was mourned.

These standardized beginnings and endings act as cognitive frames. Like the type-scenes analyzed above, these cognitive frames are formulaic and they alert the reader that a certain kind of thing is expected; they are going to be hearing a story about a hero, about a time when Israel had turned away from God, about a barren woman giving birth, and so on. And like type-scenes, these standardized beginnings and endings form a radial category. While the central category for “introducing a hero” might include name, parentage, geography, and a moral judgment, when one actually examines the individual occurrences in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* one will find that they rarely include all or only these pieces of information. For instance, in Chapter 25, Kenaz is introduced after a few verses that chronicle an expected war and the community's inquiry of God. Only as he is chosen by lot does the reader learn his name and parentage, and moral judgment is withheld is withheld by the author. Likewise, Chapter 39 combines two different frames, one that announces that the Ammonites were oppressing Israel, and another that introduces Jephthah as a valiant warrior who had been driven from home by jealous brothers—a moral judgment. But the introduction immediately belies the initial ethical assessment of Jephthah by noting that he had gathered “worthless men”, *viri vani*, to himself.

These frames, with their similarities and divergences from the central case, allow the reader to reason about what is being read: both to recognize the story as belonging to a particular genre, but also to begin looking for similarities to and differences from other biblical stories of that genre. The differences allow the reader to begin making judgments about the characters involved. That is, after all, the whole point of using biblical terminology and phrasing.

Sometimes the narrative provides information which it appears the author has deemed necessary to the story: this is a difficult thing to see in Pseudo-Philo, as one is reading the biblical text re-told, and obvi-

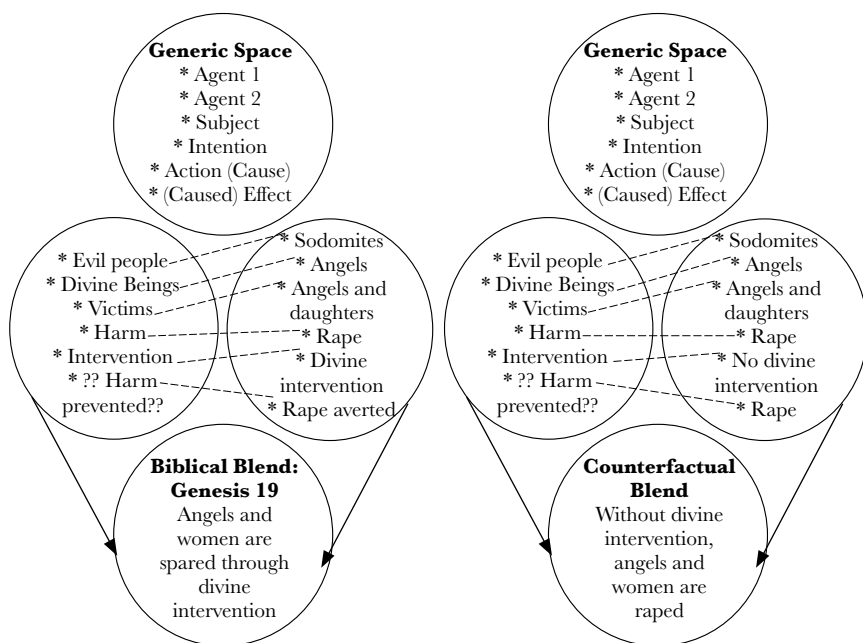
ously the original stories feel complete to the reader, as they must have to Pseudo-Philo's audience. But the author seems to interject narrative comments that give reasons for behavior that is unexplained in the biblical text. Cognitively, introducing information to a story serves to change the blends. If the original telling of a particular scene presents the possibility of a troubling blend, additional information can close out that possibility and direct the reader to another conclusion, a different cognitive blend. One such example is in Chapter 45, the re-telling of the rape of the Levite's concubine.

In the original version (Judges 19), there is no reason given for the concubine's death that relates to her own behavior. She is thrust out the door to a mob of rapacious Gibeans by a frightened husband and dies as the result of gang rape. This passage is surely to be read in tandem with Genesis 19, where two angels/divine beings³⁷ are invited to sojourn overnight with Lot in Sodom. In that story, the ravaging crowd calls for the angels to be provided for their sport. Instead, Lot offers to sacrifice his daughters, but the angels strike the men blind. Thus they and the women are spared violation.

In order to examine the blends in Pseudo-Philo's re-telling, we must begin with the story in Genesis 19, which gives us a counterfactual pair of cognitive blends for evaluating the situation. In the biblical story, the men of Sodom are evil and pose a threat to the angels and Lot's daughters. In one space, God intervenes through the angels. In the other, God does not intervene.

In both blends, divine intervention is given a causative sense. If God intervenes, there is no rape. If God had not intervened, there would have been rape. God's intervention is the cause, and the caused effect of intervention is rescue from abuse. It is this sense of causation evoked by the blend that carries over into the reading of Judges 19 and which causes problems for the author of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. The counterfactual blend from Genesis 19 is brought into play by the story in Judges 19: the Levite's concubine is raped and dies because there has been no divine intervention on her behalf.

³⁷ In Genesis 18, Abraham converses with God who appears in the form of three men—the text is unclear exactly how this works. It is apparently these men, or divine beings—angels, conveniently—who proceed on to Sodom after announcing the pending birth of Isaac.



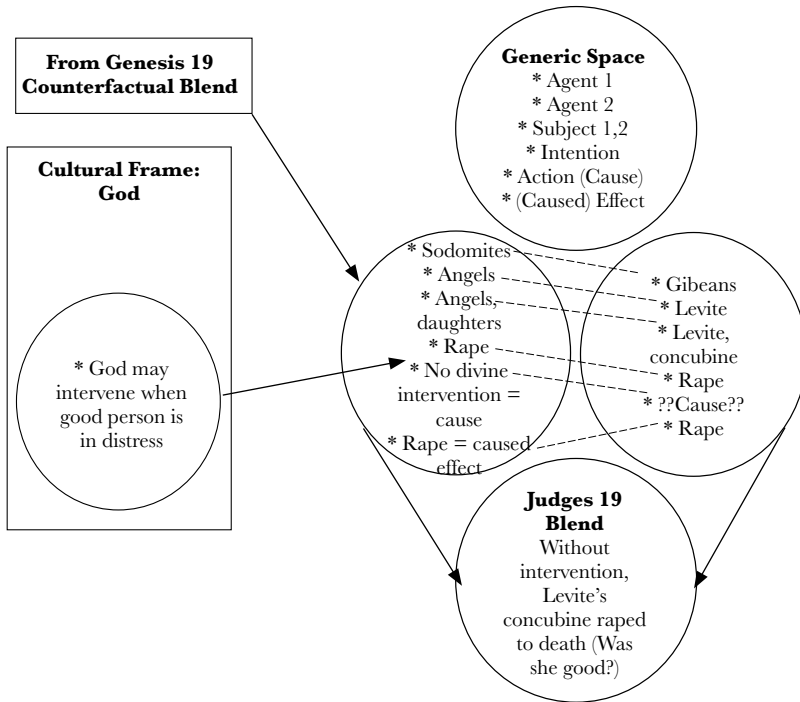
Counterfactual Blends: Divine Intervention vs. No Divine Intervention

When comparing Genesis 19 to Judges 19, the Levite fills the same role as the angels, but instead of striking his attackers blind, he cowers as his host offers up a daughter and his concubine. Then he thrusts his concubine out the door in an attempt to save his own life. The Levite ends up looking cowardly; the concubine looks like a blameless victim. God would seem to have nothing to do with this story.

But because there was a space in the prior narrative for divine intervention, that same space exists for this interpretation. The blend that results from reading Judges 19 in conjunction with the Genesis story incorporates not only the fact of “No Divine Intervention” but also the common cultural frame for God and God’s actions, whereby lack of divine intervention in a difficult situation can be the result of one’s unworthiness.

The story as told in Judges 19 is a problem for Pseudo-Philo, as *LAB*’s theology holds that God plays a part in every human drama. If this is true, then Pseudo-Philo has to sort out why God allowed the death-by-rape to happen.

In the *LAB* retelling, the narrator lets us know that the concubine was delivered by God into the hands of these sinners because she had indulged in sexual relations with the Amalekites: *[S]unt turpiter concubi-*



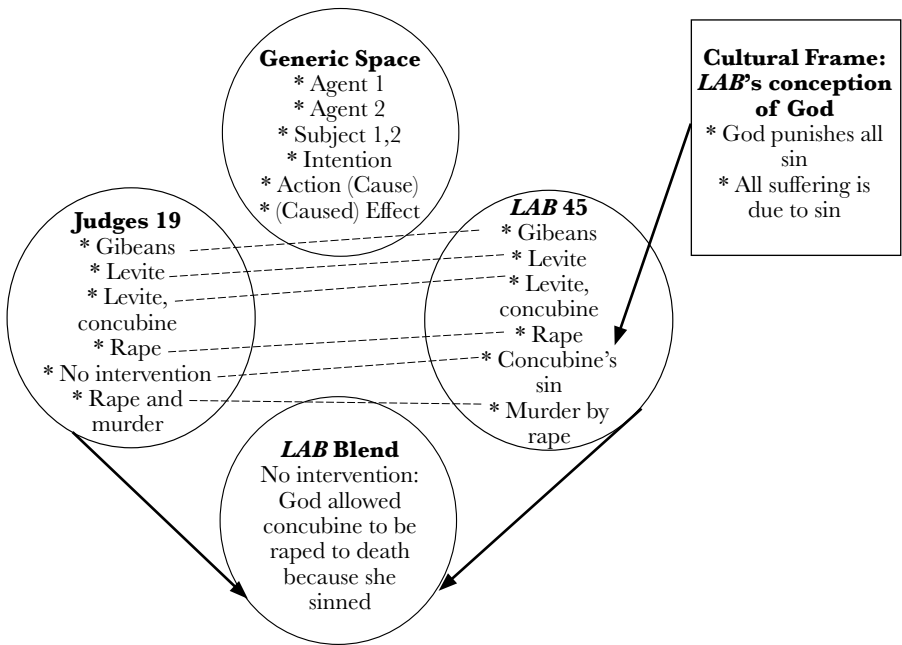
Cognitive Blend for Judges 19 with Unanswered Question of Divine Intervention

*nam eius usque quo moreretur, quoniam transgressa³⁸ fuerat virum suum quodam tempore, cum peccasset cum Amalechitis, et propterea tradidit eam Dominus Deus in manus peccatorum.*³⁹

From a cognitive blending perspective, the addition serves to provide a new “cause” for a “caused effect”; instead of attributing her suffering to God’s inaction or absence, her death now becomes the deserved result of her own illicit behavior. God takes part in this by handing her over.

³⁸ The Masoretic Text differs from the Old Latin and Septuagint here at Judges 19:2. The MT says she committed adultery against him, ותזנה עליו, while OL and LXX say she became angry with him, ὀργισθη αὐτῷ. LAB appears to agree with MT: but even in the MT, the concubine’s adultery is not the cause of her death, and nothing says that she was having sex with foreigners. Her adultery is causal only in that she leaves the Levite. One may infer some connection between adultery and her death, but it is never made explicit by any character in the text, including the Levite, the narrator, and God.

³⁹ LAB 45:3.



Blend in Pseudo-Philo's Retelling of the Levite's Concubine

In this analysis, it appears that Alter's contention that narrative can serve to convey information that would be difficult to introduce through direct speech, and which is necessary to the story, is true for Pseudo-Philo as well as for the biblical text. It is possible that someone—for instance, God—could have declared that the concubine died as punishment for her sins, but it would have broken the movement of the story. Putting this part of the story in the mouth of the narrator also helps keep God separate from the heinous act. God, in this version, does not condone the way she dies or even decree her death; God merely delivers her into the hands of the sinners. The beastly Gibeonites are responsible for her hideous death, not God.

One could still ask whether this narrative note is necessary to the story. I would argue that it most definitely is. All one has to do is to take a look at the interpretive history of this passage to see that readers for centuries have felt that the concubine's death was unjustified, and have tried to provide some kind of rationalization for this outcome.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ See, for instance, Robert Boling, *Judges* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1975); George F. Moore, *a Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Judges* (Edinburgh: T & T

Pseudo-Philo's narrative addition here serves to clarify a troubling question that the original text left unanswered, or at least unclear.

It has long been the standard interpretation that *LAB*'s additions served to clarify troubling gaps. But just what cultural processes produce the gaps and their interpretations—and why what assumptions lie behind one interpretation versus another—has not been examined. A cognitive approach can help identify more clearly the assumptions at work not just in the gap-filling but throughout the entire text of a document such as *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*.

3.5.2 *Ancillary Information*

Some narrative provides **ancillary information**; it may make the tale more interesting but the data does not necessarily advance the action of the scene or story. These biblical notes often relate to a physical detail or an inner condition, and Alter argues that these details are sometimes withheld until their revelation can have some thematic importance, such as the description of David as a ruddy youth just as he meets the enormous, formidable warrior Goliath on the battlefield.

Much of the supplemental material in Pseudo-Philo has to do with numbers and names. The rhetorical effect of these additions will be examined in the next chapter; in this section I will examine Pseudo-Philo's use of narrative additions to advance a theme or undergird some aim of the story.

Cognitively, the addition of narrative material that is supplemental can function in the same way that addition of narrative material that is essential to the story. The new information creates new blends. This new data allows the reader to reason about or understand the person or situation in a different way.

But new narrative material can also reiterate an existing blend. The repetition of a blend used previously in the narrative underscores the importance of that particular blend, raising it from background to consciousness.

In Chapter 25, Kenaz is chosen as leader of the Israelites and proceeds to examine the tribes by lot. Members of each tribe confess and detail their sin, usually an abrogation of the commandments against idolatry or adultery. But in the middle of the investigation, the action

Clark, 1897); Phyllis Trible, *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984); Mieke Bal, *Death & Dissymmetry* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

stops in order for the narrator to spell out the names, materials, design, and power of the Amorite precious stones. While the text at 25:11–12 has multiple lacunae, there are several things that are clear. First, there are seven stones, devised by seven sinful men and named after them. Most of these men are descendants of Ham. The stones came from Havilah, and were carved from crystal and prase, among other things. Nothing like their engraving or adornment would ever be seen again in the world. The stones could provide light like the light of a lamp at night, could release people from demons, and heal blindness.

When God replaces these stones in Chapter 26, God provides 12 stones, each engraved with the name of a tribe. They are engraved by angels, and each one is only “like,” *consimilabatur*, some precious stone.⁴¹ Nothing is said about the stones having the power to heal blindness or purify a person from demons. When placed in the ark, the stones shine “as if the light of the sun poured over them and the earth shone from their light,” *velut lumine solis diffuso super illos splendebat terra de lumine eorum*.

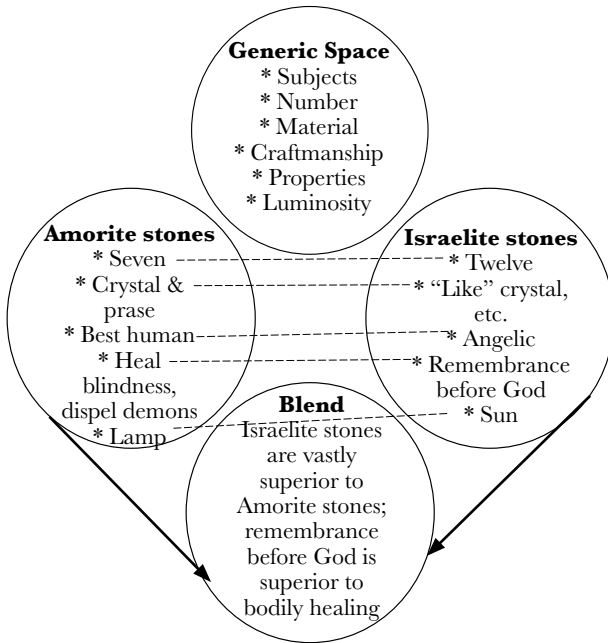
If one were to compare these two narrative interjections, the connections and contrasts are easy to spot. Seven stones for seven evil men⁴², and a dozen for the twelve tribes of Israel; outstanding handiwork by humans versus the craftsmanship of angels; earthly materials contrasted with other-worldly resources; the light of a lamp versus the light of the sun. The superiority of the stones of Israel to the stones of the Amorites is clear, and clearly the author’s intent. Only the curative powers of the Amorite stones are unmatched.⁴³ Instead, the twelve Israelite stones are to be stored in the ark until the temple is built, and then, set up before God as a memorial of the people.

As a cognitive blend, the comparison is easy to set up. The narrative insertions are related through role and properties, as below. As we can see, the stones given by God exceed the Amorite stones in every respect:

⁴¹ James has already noted that this enhances their stature: they may be like earthly stones but they are actually different.

⁴² In an example from *LAB*’s era, the number seven is used to refer to Gentiles generally; see Matthew 14 and 15 where the feeding story is told twice, once in Jewish territory, where 12 baskets of food are left over and once where Jesus has passed along the Sea of Galilee and ascended a mountain, most likely in the region of the Decapolis. Here the masses are fed and 7 baskets of leftovers are gathered.

⁴³ Healing powers were not necessarily a positive value for Israel. See, for instance, 1 Enoch 7, where teaching medicine, incantations, the cutting of roots, and knowledge of plants is portrayed as evil. My thanks to Antoinette Wire for pointing this out.



Blend: Amorite versus Israelite Stones

there are more of them, the material is more precious, divine—rather than human—beings fashion them, and they give off vastly more light. The only place where the Amorite stones could be said to surpass the Israelite stones is in the matter of healing. But because these properties have been juxtaposed, the reader is encouraged to assume that reminding God of God's precious Israel is more important than the occasional miracle, which could be performed by any itinerant sage. This narrative encourages the reader to make certain assumptions, and these assumptions operate cognitively without any overt comparison or direct comment by either the narrator or the characters.

While notice of the finding of the sacred stones, and possibly their number, is necessary to the story at hand, the additional descriptions are not. The theme that is introduced by the additions—the superiority of the God and sacred texts and objects of Israel to those of their neighbors—while present throughout all of Pseudo-Philo, is central to the story of Kenaz. These narrative additions underscore and reiterate an essential argument advanced by Pseudo-Philo.

3.5.3 *Dialogue plus Narrative*

Alter also argues that narrative can serve to **mirror, confirm, undermine, or focus attention** on statements made in direct speech. Alter notes that this narrative echoing, be it partial or complete, aims the reader back at the speech to look for similarities and differences, confirmation or contradiction. When the author uses direct speech in conjunction with narrative, it is an attempt to direct our attention. Alter argues that paying attention to the small alterations and revisions when direct speech is repeated narratively can highlight oblique suggestions by biblical writers that are intended to lead readers to certain inferences.

A cognitive analysis of direct speech and narrative confirmation (or contradiction) would involve mapping the blends for each separately and comparing the conclusions. The resulting blends are essentially counterfactuals: they show two different views of a reality. If the inputs yield significantly different blends, then those can be compared. It is the comparison of the blends that causes us to make a judgment that the narrative is confirming, mirroring, contradicting, or focusing attention upon some aspect of direct speech.

3.5.3.1 *Dialogue+ Narrative: Undermining*

Chapter 31 shows an example of narration following a character's statement that appears to **undermine** direct speech. In verse 7, Jael has approached the sleeping Sisera with a tent peg in her hand, but wants assurance from God that she is doing the right thing. She says,

Hoc signum si faciet mecum Dominus, scio quoniam incidet in manus mea Sisera. Ecce iacto eum in terram de lecto in quo dormit, et erit ut si non senserit scio quoniam traditus est. Et accipiens Iahel Sisaram, impulit eum in terram de lecto. Ille autem non sentiebat quoniam valde fuerat dissolutus.

"If God will perform this sign for me, I know that Sisera will fall at my hands. Behold, I will throw him on the ground from the bed on which he sleeps: if he does not sense this, I know that he has been handed over." Jael took Sisera and pushed him onto the ground from the bed. But he did not sense it, because he was very exhausted.

If one closely compares the wording between Jael's speech and the narration, several differences appear. First, though Jael speaks of throwing Sisera off the bed, in the narrator's eyes she only pushes him. The narrated action is less forceful than the action predicted by direct speech. While one can attribute the difference to a desire for variety in the story,

one could also conclude that the distinction is meaningful, designed to portray Jael as a big talker but a timid doer. How does one decide?

Jael's speech contains two different counterfactual statements: "If God will perform this sign for me, I know that Sisera will fall at my hands" and, "If he does not sense this, I know that he has been handed over." Both of these statements conjure up a cognitive alternative: "If God doesn't perform this sign for me, then Sisera won't fall at my hands", "If Sisera senses this, then he won't be handed over." Her speech leaves the reader with the cognitive possibilities that God may not perform a sign, and that Sisera might sense Jael pushing.

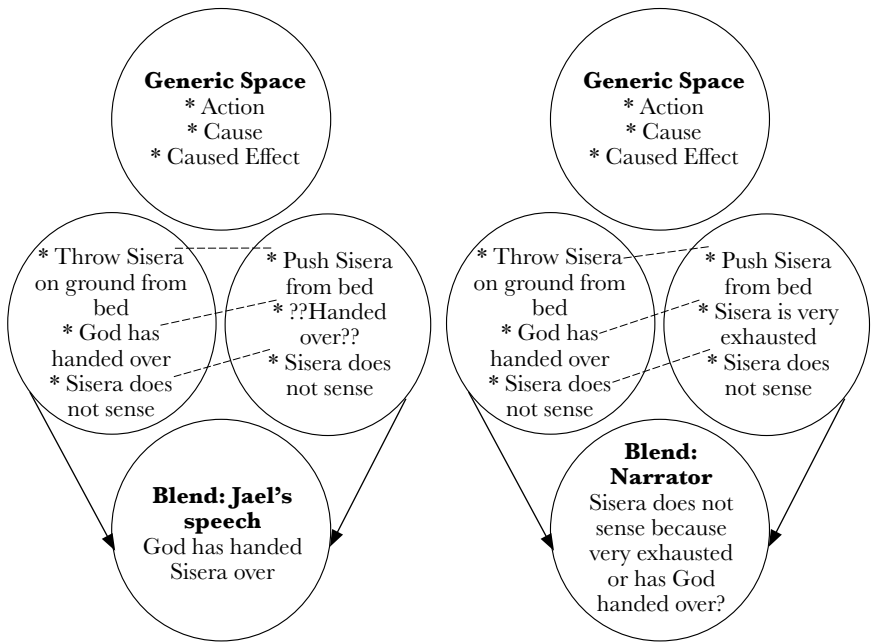
Jael's desired outcomes happen by the end of verse 7. Sisera does not wake up, at least until she has struck him fatally; Jael does indeed kill him. However, her causal connections are called into question by the narrative. Sisera, we are told, was very exhausted.⁴⁴ This narrative description seems to provide a reason for his unresponsiveness. So the reader wonders, is exhaustion the reason why he was senseless? Did God arrange this oblivion or not? Again, how does one decide which interpretation is more accurate?

If one were to map these two mental spaces evoked by Jael's speech, which are themselves counterfactuals, we would see one scenario where Sisera's stupor results from God's desire to provide a sign for Jael, and another where his exhaustion seems causal for the subsequent events without any divine intervention.

The narrator's conclusion about why Sisera fell from the bed senseless appears to differ from Jael's conclusion. Sisera is, the narrator points out, extremely tired. This would seem to indicate that Sisera's condition might not be the result of God's action but merely a natural consequence of fighting a battle. The uncertainty contributes to the tension between the two renditions.

It is true that the narrative refusal to complete the sequence—to state that God has provided a sign—leaves the door open for the narrator to draw out the story, to provide entertainment and nuance. The reader hears Jael recite a prayer for strength, the narrator recount the striking of the deathblow, and an exultant Jael castigating the pitiful

⁴⁴ Not just *dissolutus*, but *valde dissolutus*. Others in Pseudo-Philo are referred to as *dissolutus*: Saul when Samuel predicts his death, Samuel when he learns of the prediction he must give Eli, Hannah when overcome by grief, the people in the Benjaminite war when they've been fooled by God and lost two battles. Even Sisera uses it of himself earlier, but without the adverb.



Jael's Speech versus the Narration: Did God Hand Sisera Over?

Sisera. But never is it made explicit in the narration that God has been active as Jael requested.

If there are different conclusions available to the reader (God has given a sign, God has not given a sign), how does one differentiate between them? One could do so on the basis of the reliability of the characters making the claims. In this case, we know that the narrator has access to God's thoughts, deeds, and speeches. At the same time, though Jael speaks to God, and conceives of herself as an agent of God, by the end of the scene she receives no communications from God in any form—direct speech, angelic messenger, or vision. She may be doing the right thing but God is not going to let her know. It would seem that we should trust the narrator more than Jael. Or, it may be that Pseudo-Philo does not want to show Israel's God conversing with a foreign woman, no matter how supportive she is of Israel.

The slight differences between Jael's claims and the narrator's recounting cast doubt on her character. To the earlier ambiguous situation, where we wondered whether pushing rather than throwing Sisera means anything, we can add the information that the narrator is more reliable than Jael. Instead of attributing the semantic difference

to the writer's desire to entertain, we begin to think that Jael talks big but acts hesitantly. She assumes God is guiding her when her ally may just be battle fatigue. This is in keeping with Pseudo-Philo's generally ambivalent stance towards this foreign woman who was necessary to Israel's survival.⁴⁵ In this case, the narrative differs just enough from the direct speech to provide an oblique comment on Jael. She may respect God's people; she may talk to God; but she never hears from God. Jael may have seen herself collaborating with God; whether God saw the same thing is unclear.

3.5.3.2 *Dialogue + Narrative: Confirmation and Mirroring*

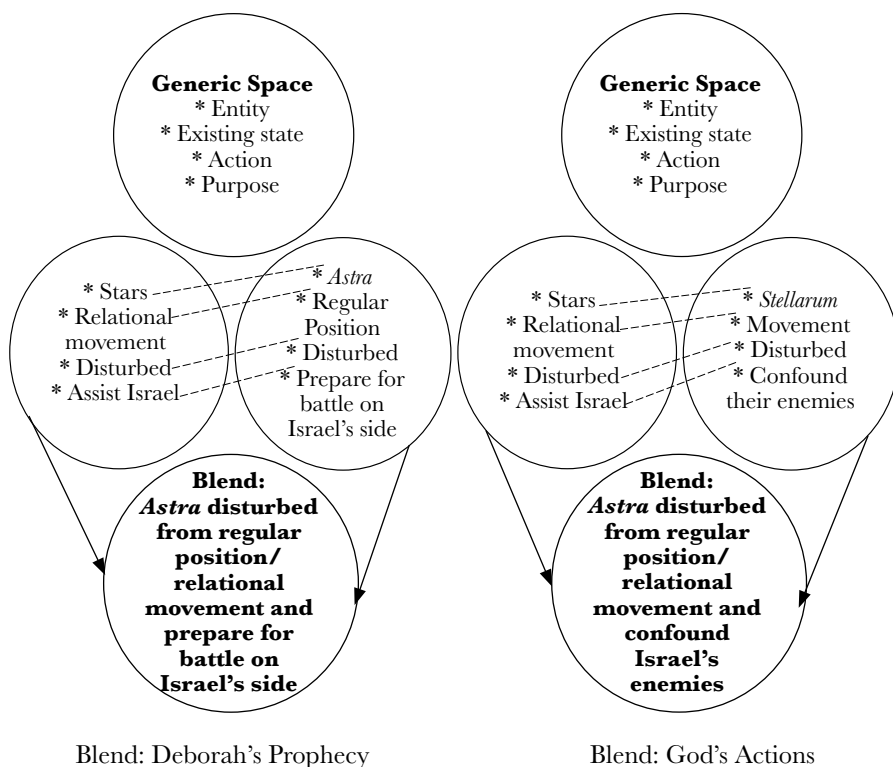
In 31.7, then, the narrative serves to undermine the speech. But earlier in the chapter, Pseudo-Philo uses narrative to **confirm speech**. In verse 31.1, Deborah tells Barak that she "sees the stars being disturbed in their arrangement," *video astra conturbari in dispositione sua*, in preparation for battle on Israel's side. In the following verse, God "immediately disturbed the movement of his stars," *statim Dominus conturbavit motum stellarum suarum*, and tells them to hurry and go confound Israel's enemies.⁴⁶ While synonyms are used for the heavenly bodies—*astra* versus *stellarum*—the difference between these two words does not appear to be significant. The action to be taken by the stars is identical: they are to be disturbed, *conturbo*. Finally, the regular arrangement, *dispositione*, of the stars is equated with their movement, *motum*. This lexical variation is not particularly noteworthy either, as the regular arrangement of stars is a composition of movement and relationship. Finally, God's command follows immediately, *statim*, upon Deborah's announcement and the movement of the Israelite war party towards battle.

Cognitively, one would map the direct statement and the narrative as counterfactuals, but there would be little discrepant material: the resulting blends are virtually identical. The prediction made in Deborah's direct speech appears, therefore, to be confirmed and supported by the narrator's report of God's action.

The use of the same verb in both the direct speech and the narrative underscores the confirmation. When Deborah uses *conturbari*, a

⁴⁵ See Chapter Five: Mixed Up Metaphors.

⁴⁶ Interestingly, Jacobson translates *conturbari* as "moving" and *conturbavit* as "disturbed." While these varied translations are not incorrect, using different meanings for the same word masks the effect of the repetition in this passage.



Blend: Deborah's Prophecy

Blend: God's Actions

passive present,⁴⁷ and God uses *conturbavit*, an active perfect, it gives a feel of continuous action: the disturbance is predicted and happens, seamlessly.⁴⁸

Alter also speaks of biblical narrative **mirroring** direct speech. The phenomenon of mirroring is rare in Pseudo-Philo; this may be the side effect of surviving two translations, or it may be that the author did not find this literary technique pleasing. But the essential cognitive mechanism in narrative **mirroring** would be identical to those above: comparison of the blends resulting from the direct speech and the narrative. Differences would be judged by means of some pre-existing frame (e.g., the blends would be members of a radial category,

⁴⁷ I am assuming medieval orthography here, where *i* is often written for *e*.

⁴⁸ Cognitively, the two usages of *conturbo* are inputs to a blend, where the inputs are related through identity (the same word) and each input has a temporal component. The blend shows the action happening through time, as it were.

and they would be examined to see how closely they conform to the central category.)

3.5.3.3 *Dialogue + Narrative: Drawing Attention and Performative Speech*

Finally, Alter sees narrative serving to **draw attention** to something that has been said earlier. Cognitively, this kind of literary action could function several ways. One could construct counterfactual spaces, where one blend is the result of the direct speech and the other is the result of the narrative, and those blended spaces could be compared as category members, just as outlined in the previous section. Or, the speech and the narrative might serve as inputs to a blend which takes as (part of) its generic space the standard format for causality: cause, and caused effect. We can use this generic space because there is a time differential between the utterance of a character and the narration, which allows us to reason about cause and effect (when A occurs before B, we think A causes B). It is the difference in times—the sequencing—that can imply that the first occurrence has caused the second. In other words, the direct speech prediction is followed by a narrative fulfillment. The result of such a sequence is that the speaker is seen as reliable because his or her words are realized.⁴⁹

This causal relationship between direct speech and narrative occurs in performative speech. A speech act that shapes reality, performative speech reverses the usual direction of fit between an utterance and reality. When one articulates a descriptive statement or asserts a fact, it is either true or false. Fit between the statement and the world depends on whether the statement is an accurate representation of the world. But when one speaks a performative word, the word fits reality because it changes reality. The words, “This is my body which was given up for you,” changes bread into the body of Christ according to Roman Catholic teachings. A more mundane occurrence is, “I promise I’ll mail that for you.” The mailing may or may not occur, but the statement is not only a description of promising but represents an actual promise.

Authority is necessary to the act of performative speech. One must have the sufficient authority or capacity in order for the speech to “work”. It would not be an issue for a statement such as, “I promise.” But other declarations need to be made by a sanctioned person in order

⁴⁹ Or not, if the narrative contradicts the direct speech. See below.

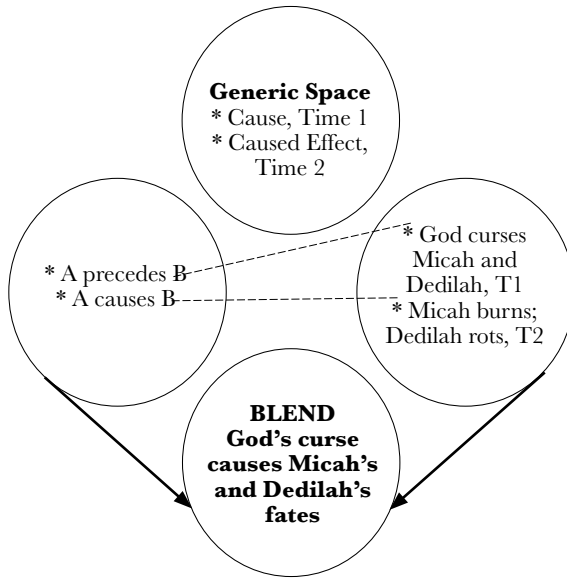
for them to be performative. For instance, if I were to stand up in a Roman Catholic church and recite the words of institution over the bread and wine, my speech would be at best a contested case and at worst a failure of performative speech, because I am not a male cleric, though I am ordained.⁵⁰

Pseudo-Philo takes great care to assure that the authority of God is never in question. Direct speech by God is virtually always followed by narrative notice of its fulfillment: see, for instance, *LAB* 9:7–8 and the following chapters on Moses; *LAB* 7:2–4 and fulfillment in *LAB* 7:5 and 8:1; *LAB* 39:11 and fulfillment in *LAB* 40. As a matter of course, Pseudo-Philo seems to add performative speech prior to situations where action occurs without obvious intention in the biblical text.

To look more closely at cognitive mapping in performative speech, let us examine *LAB* 44 through 47. At 44:9, God declares, “I will deliver Micah to the fire and his mother will be rotting away before him while alive upon the earth and worms will come forth from her body.” (*Micham autem tradam igni, et erit mater eius in conspectu eius marcescens viva super terram, et vermes exient de corpore eius.*) Later, at 47:12, the narrator reports that, “At that time the Lord repaid to Micah and his mother all he had said. Micah melted in the fire and his mother wasted away, just as the Lord had said concerning them.” (*Et in illo tempore reddidit Dominus Miche et matri eius omnia que locutus est. Et erat Micha dissolutus igne, et mater eius marcescens, sicut locutus fuerat Dominus de eis.*) The world has changed to fit the reality that God declared. God’s speech has brought a new world into being.

In the original biblical rendition (Judges 17–18), Micah acquires an idol, manufactures an ephod and teraphim, hires a Levite priest, and suffers no punishment except loss of priest and sacramental items to the Danites. These chapters are followed by the story of the rape and death of another Levite’s concubine, which triggers the Benjaminites war. More than 65,000 Israelites die in the war, many as the result of deceptive answers from God. Nothing in the original text gives a reason for the massive loss of life except that it occurs at the end of a chain of events where characters are making decisions according to their own desires, not those of God.

⁵⁰ Eve Sweetser’s examination of performative linguistic usage and cognitive analysis of performative speech provided the background for this section. Sweetser, “Blended spaces and performativity,” *Cognitive Linguistics* 11:3/4 (2000).



Blend: God's Performative Speech

In Pseudo-Philo's retelling, between God's declaration of Micah and Dedilah's coming torment and the narrative announcement of its fulfillment, Israel is engaged in the same internecine war resulting, ostensibly, from the concubine's death. For *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, however, the concubine's death is her own fault, and the massive deaths in the Benjaminite war are directly tied to Israel's tolerance of Micah and his unauthorized priestly accoutrements and actions. *LAB* 47:12 is the final verse at the end of the chapter where God explains all this to Israel, and the Benjaminites are finally defeated.

In the blend, the speech act of God and the fate of Micah and Dedilah constitute a single input.⁵¹ The causal relationship between an action and a following effect is another input. The blended space—the place of performative speech—is where God's words cause the torments of Micah and Dedilah.

LAB 47:12 acts as a summary statement to point the reader back to the beginning of the sequence. God's angry assertion about Micah and

⁵¹ Obviously, this input is a blend itself: God's curse and Dedilah and Micah's fates are linked through similarity (both involve burning and rotting), identity (God, Micah, and Dedilah are the characters in both passages), intentionality (God states God's intention in 44:9, 47:12 reiterates this statement) and time.

Dedilah's fate is fulfilled. Lest the reader be uncertain, Pseudo-Philo introduces 47:12 with notice that God repaid Micah and Dedilah all that he said (*...reddidit Dominus Miche et matri eius omnia que locutus est*) and finishes the sentence by reiterating that what happened to them was just as God said, *sicut locutus fuerat Dominus de eis*. Pseudo-Philo wishes to make very clear the connection between God's condemnation and the sinner's eventual fate. The passage in Chapter 47 reminds the reader that God punishes sin, in every case. Micah, who escaped punishment in the biblical text, will not emerge unscathed in Pseudo-Philo.

The passage also serves to underline the connection between Micah's apostasy, Israel's tolerance of Micah, and the resulting loss of life. This bolsters the reliability and consistency of God the character. Since reliability, as a character trait, can be understood cognitively as the consonance between a character's speech and subsequent actions, God's reliability depends on how closely God's predictions are fulfilled. Reliability is clearly a question for Pseudo-Philo, since the mayhem of the biblical Benjaminite war occurs precisely because God is not reliable: the Israelites are duped by God's deceptive oracular messages. *LAB* provides a reason—apostasy—for these deaths. Loss of life can no longer be ascribed to God's capricious behavior.

3.6 CHARACTERIZATION AND RELIABILITY

There is a common folk model that says we are best able to determine a person's moral character by observing what that person says and does. One's own observations are best able to tell us about another's motivation, outlook, and ethical constitution. But whenever one attempts to evaluate another person, that evaluation is always the result of blending. Except when we are dealing with overt appraisals—a trusted authority says, "Peg is a bad person"⁵²—we pick and choose various actions, physical characteristics, and remarks which we use to determine her character. This has a less exact result than we would like: one person

⁵² And even when an authority makes such a statement, we may choose different information for our blend than the authority uses if there is sufficient divergence between ourselves and the authority in other matters. For instance, a Democrat in the U.S., while concerned about terrorism, may disagree with the President's characterization of certain countries as an "Axis of Evil." In this situation, the result is not only a difference of opinion about a third person's character, but also a questioning of the veracity of the authority.

could focus on Peg's sweaty palms, which he blends with a stereotype of a shifty character, while another concentrates on her relationship to her children, which she blends with the model of a trustworthy mom. Attending to different data results in different blends; different blends result in different assessments.

Even if this satisfying folk model were true, it is not valid when it comes to a text like the Bible or Pseudo-Philo. Because our observations come through the text—allowed by the author, not the result of our own eyes and ears—we must rely on a different method of assessment.

Alter argues that in biblical texts, character is revealed in a number of ways, and that some of these ways are more accurate gauges than others. According to Alter, a biblical character's actions are least reliable for predicting his or her moral nature; appearance is slightly more reliable; direct speech and another person's comments are increasingly predictive; the individual's inner speech is reckoned quite accurate; and finally, most reliably, comes the narrator's comments about that person (provided one is dealing with a text where the narrator is reliable).⁵³

Action and appearance, he holds, place the reader in the position of making inferences about the character. Direct speech and another's comments allow a reader to weigh claims: what is said may or may not be true, the speaker may be presenting a biased or unbiased opinion. Once one enters the realm of internal thought, judgments are easier to make as the reader is privy to the character's conscious intentions. Of course, conscious intention may still hide a faulty motivation. Only the narrator, whose reliability in biblical texts is certain, can be fully trusted to present a "true" assessment of a character.⁵⁴

Cognitive scientists would agree with Alter that there is a gradation in the reliability of information in the text, and that the biblical narrator is attributed absolute reliability. In a text such as the Bible, where one has a high status (reliable, omniscient) narrator, one's own observations must necessarily give way to the judgments of the narrator. We operate within a frame, when we read the biblical text or a related text, in which the narrator has high status and reliability, and we the readers are naïve and must trust. The blend in this situation is essentially the witness blend (see Chapter Five, *Rewritten Bible As*

⁵³ A situation which Alter says is true in biblical texts, and which I would argue Pseudo-Philo attempts to emulate.

⁵⁴ Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 116–17.

Conceptual Blend). The witness who is reporting to the reader has access to God and knows God's thoughts and intentions; there is no way that a reader can claim the same stature.

Linguistically, the moral standing of a particular character is constituted by building up a generic space for an individual and comparing that input with another generic space, "X", which represents a certain character type; in other words, the comparison of two frames or inputs.⁵⁵ How closely a person conforms to generic space "X" determines how good an example of an "X" she is.

If "X" represents a character type, how is "X" identified? "X" is, essentially, a central case in a radial category, comprising the ideal of a category.⁵⁶ It would not necessarily be synonymous with any single person but would be a composite of traits that people who are said to be "X" possess. Every different character type—fool, gynecologist, graduate student, exotic dancer—would have a list of traits that compose the central case.

3.6.1 *Assessing Character: A Test Case for Seila*

Say, for instance, that one wishes to assess the character of Seila in relationship to other women as depicted in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. One might wonder how she compares to Deborah, Tamar, Elumah, or Hannah. Is she wise? Is she a good Jew? Does she go to her death willingly? Does she tell the truth?

Those questions can help us realize that we need to start with a generic space, which we'll call "Faithful Jewish Woman."⁵⁷ The generic space, of course, is a construct, concocted by looking at the women who are viewed positively by Pseudo-Philo. While no one woman will fit all the criteria, it will be clearly recognizable as Pseudo-Philo's ideal Jewish woman.

Virtually all of the women portrayed positively in Pseudo-Philo are Jewish, and they are knowledgeable of the scripture and traditions of Israel. Deborah quotes the prophets, reviews salvation history, and reminds people of the covenant. Tamar is mindful of the laws against intermarriage. Hannah recites predictions from a minor prophet. Even

⁵⁵ Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*, 251–3.

⁵⁶ See my section on Categories in Chapter 2.

⁵⁷ We could, obviously, compare her to other generic spaces—for instance, "Dutiful Child," "Holy Martyr," "Person Chosen by God," and so on. The list of possibilities is open-ended.

Jael, the only non-Jew who is portrayed somewhat positively, knows the special relationship of Israel to God.

Not only do these women know and observe the laws and traditions, they are capable of proper interpretation when the scripture is not clear. Tamar, according to *LAB*, has correctly understood which laws are to be obeyed.⁵⁸ Hannah's triumphal song outlines the ways that God will bring justice after death. Deborah teaches the people that dead people cannot pray, and that behavior while alive is most important.

Humility in the presence of God and males is another positive character trait for females. Deborah does not lead Israel into battle but calls Barak to do that. Hannah is aware that God may refuse her request due to her unworthiness. Elumah apologizes to her husband for her accusations of infertility. When Miriam's parents don't believe her report of a divine visitation, she says nothing.

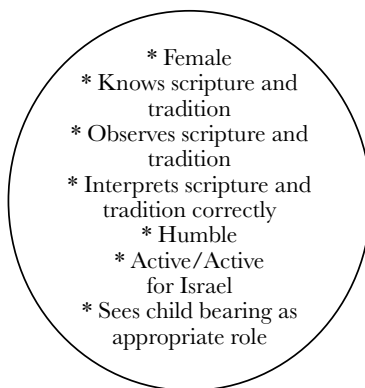
An active stance and work on the part of the community is also part of this generic space. Deborah leads and teaches the community; her actions include sending, summoning, and speaking. Elumah invites God to tell her if it's her fault that she is childless. Hannah goes alone to pray for a child, and gives that child as priest for Israel. Miriam sees visions and tries to communicate the message about Moses to her parents.

The final component of the generic space is an emphasis on child bearing as the appropriate role for women. Tamar clearly values child bearing, even at the risk of her life. Hannah and Elumah engage in extensive prayer to rectify their childless state. While nothing is said of bearing her own children, Deborah positions herself as a mother to the community and tells them to heed her as they heed their own mothers. Even Jael emphasizes the reproductive capacity of Israel.⁵⁹ No other role for women is given such attention or status.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ See Chapter Six: Biblical Insertions: Time Out of Joint.

⁵⁹ So too, obviously, Amram's arguments against the elders.

⁶⁰ See especially Betsy Halpern-Amaru, "Women in Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities*," *Women Like This: New Perspectives on Jewish Women in the Greco-Roman World* (ed. Amy-Jill Levine; Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1991) 83–106.

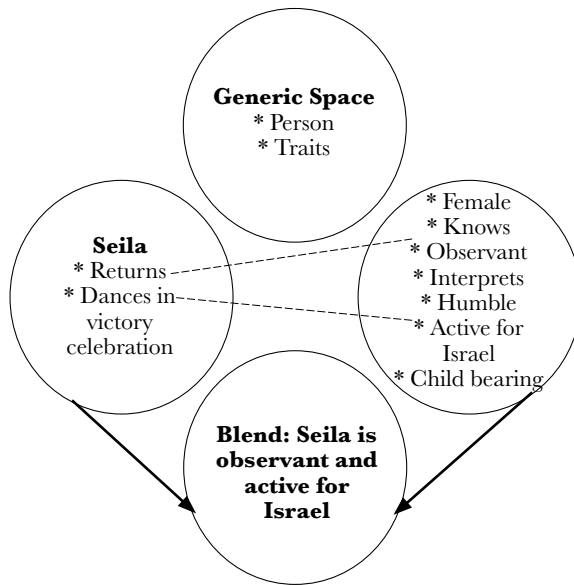


Central Case (Ideal): Faithful Jewish Woman

If one wished to determine whether Seila fit this category, evaluating only her actions would give some information. One might notice is that all of the verbs describing Seila are active. She “came out of the house first in dancing,” (*in choris exiit prius de domo*); she “set out... came and reported,” (*... profecta est... et venit, et narravit...*); she “came... began to weep... lamented and wept over herself... and said,” (*venit... cepit plorare... plangens ploravit se antequam... et dixit..*) and she “returned,” (*reversa est*). Even when she comes home to be sacrificed, she is not described as a passive recipient. Rather, the passage says that her father did everything that he had vowed and offered burnt offerings. In blend after blend, she is the actor, not the acted upon; she is the subject, not the object. Because her behavior is never described in the passive voice, we can assume that the author wished to portray her with a certain level of autonomy and intentionality.

By using Seila’s actions as one input and the central case of “Faithful Jewish woman” as the other input, we can deduce two obvious results in the blend. First, because she came out to meet her father with dances after his victory, she behaved appropriately for her gender and situation. Second, because she returned to be sacrificed, she was observant of scripture and tradition. None of the other actions that she takes can tell us more, at least insofar as this category goes.⁶¹

⁶¹ It is true that what Seila does mostly in *LAB* 40 is mourn—for her father’s rash vow, she says, though most of it sounds like she is mourning for herself. It is also true that mourning is an appropriate female action in that culture, and in the Bible. How-



Blend: What Seila's Actions Show About Her Character

If one wished to examine **appearance** to determine whether Seila qualifies as a “Faithful Jewish woman”, there are no descriptions of her, whether dancing or talking or weeping. The reader does not know if she does things well or poorly, if she’s beautiful or homely, young or old. The one thing we do know is that Seila is the only-begotten daughter, (*unigenita filia*), of Jephthah. But if we want to see what this means for her character, the category for Faithful Jewish women tells us nothing. There is no point of contact and no blend. A more likely comparison is with the men in *LAB* who also qualify as only-begotten. Isaac fits such a bill,⁶² as do Samuel and Samson. From a cognitive blend with these only-begotten men, we learn that she is precious and that some kind of sacrifice is required on her part—Isaac is nearly presented as a burnt offering, Samuel is given to the priests, and Samson is a Nazirite.

ever, as good Jewish women are constructed by *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, mourning is not included on the list of qualifications.

⁶² Provided you consider only the offspring of Abraham through Sarah! But Isaac is specifically referenced in Seila’s first speech.

However, little about her character is revealed because these men do not provide a consistent guide to character.⁶³

The other thing we learn is that Seila was valued by the virgins of Israel, who buried her, and the greater community, who mourn her annually.⁶⁴

Thus far, the information afforded us about Seila's character through observation is minimal. Moving on to **direct speech**, that of Seila or another character, the input becomes more specific.

Seila's only speech is directed at her father. In this she reminds her father that he should be happy because Israel won, and that Isaac went gladly to be offered. She directs him to fulfill his vow. She also requests time to mourn: not for herself, but for her father who was trapped by his vow. She also says that she is afraid that if she wasn't willing, the sacrifice wouldn't be acceptable and the loss of her life would be for nothing.

What do we learn about her character through this speech? First, she knows her scripture and understands her part in the life of the community. She is aware that the sacrificed person has to be willing and she wants to make sure she is. This is a factual matter: she understands the tradition as well as scripture.⁶⁵ In addition, we learn that Seila encourages her father to fulfill his vow, and that she grieves not for herself but for her father who's made a stupid mistake. This may indicate humility: her father's pain is worse than her own.

The reader don't know if Seila is telling the truth when she says she does not grieve for herself. We can imagine that she really believes she must be sacrificed or alternatively that she longs for him to break his vow; that she is more concerned for her father or that she's just saying that to keep her dignity: she is either a knowledgeable truth teller

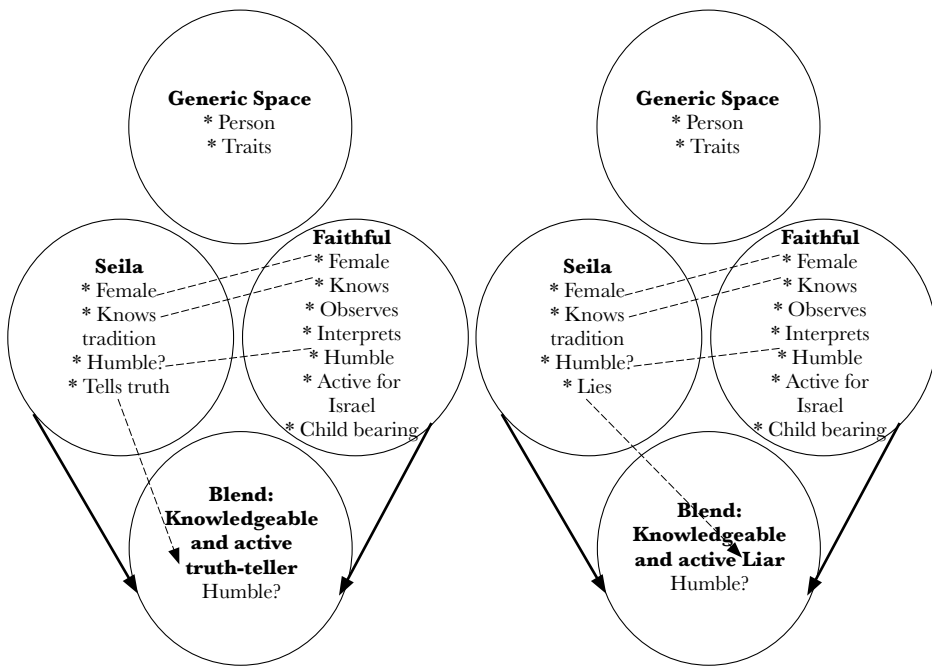
⁶³ Samuel and Isaac are both righteous, but Samson, even with *LAB*'s revisions, is involved with foreign women and only redeems himself in his death.

⁶⁴ Reading against Jacobson who follows Kisch and Dietzfelbringer who read *filie* with the π manuscript instead of *filii* with Δ . However, I would argue there is no reason to desert the principle of *lectio difficilior*. While women did the mourning in Judges one need not assume that Pseudo-Philo would hesitate to expand the grieving community. Certainly, the introduction of women into every aspect of community life is part of Pseudo-Philo's standard fare: it is the entire community that mourns for Deborah in *LAB* 33:6. Jacobson's argument that this might be connected to the Tammuz/Osiris day of mourning is interesting but not necessarily convincing. (See Jacobson, "The Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum and Tammuz," *JSP* 8 (1991) 63–65.)

⁶⁵ It is clearly tradition, not scripture, which states Isaac went willingly to be offered.

or a knowledgeable liar.⁶⁶ All of these blends are possible, given the information we have at hand. (They would represent counterfactual possibilities of reality.)

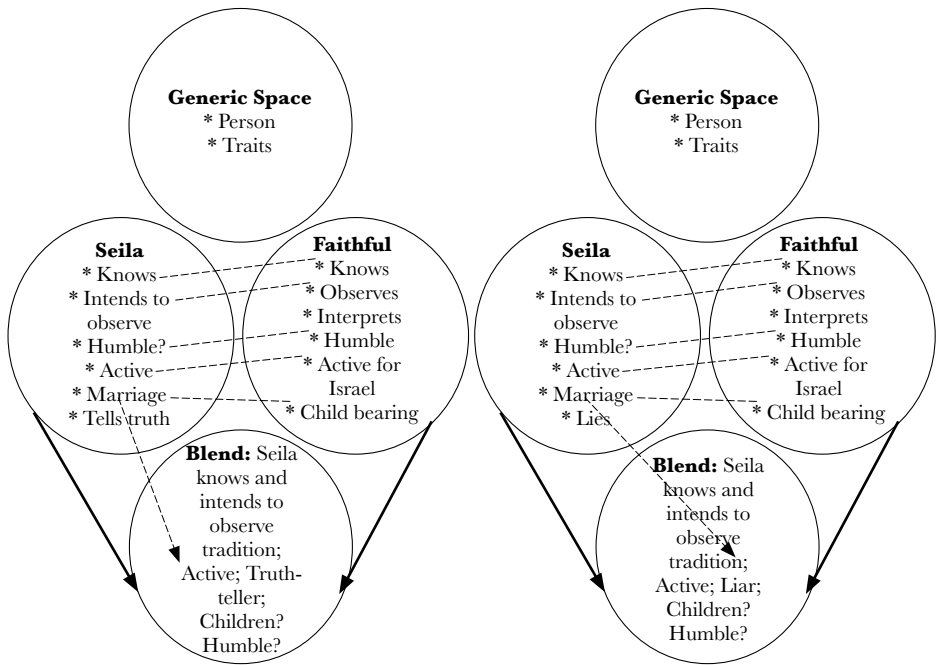
Using only the information that we garner from Seila's direct speech, we can see the following possible conclusions. Still, we have very little real information about her character. She is knowledgeable of tradition and scripture. We learned from description and actions that she is an observant and appropriately active female.⁶⁷ But we don't know much else.



Counterfactual Blends: Seila as Truth-teller vs. Seila as Liar, No. 1

⁶⁶ Or, alternatively, a knowledgeable person who wants her father to think she's okay.

⁶⁷ At least her actions are appropriate in the one case of dancing in a victory celebration.



Counterfactual Blends: Seila as Truth-Teller vs. Seila as Liar, No. 2

Internal speech should provide us even more reliable input, and Chapter 40 includes significant internal speech. Seila’s lament in the mountains gives a slightly different picture of her feelings than does her address to her father. In this internal speech, Seila envisions her death as an object lesson; others must learn from her suffering never to make the mistakes her father made. And she spends considerable time bemoaning the fact that she will never be married, that her life is cut short. If we examine the blend given us by internal speech, we see that it clarifies that she is knowledgeable about, and intends to be observant of, the law and tradition—even though it is disastrous for her. While *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* in general emphasizes child bearing as the ultimate female pursuit, Seila says not a word about never having children.⁶⁸ The question of whether she’s a dissembler is still open.

⁶⁸ It is not unreasonable to assume that this is part of her grief over her virginal state; however, no mention is made in her lament.

At the next level of reliability is the **speech of others** about Seila. There are two different speakers, Jephthah and God, and I would argue that their input is not equally dependable.

Jephthah has already shown that he is less knowledgeable than the character God. In the previous chapter, God has condemned him for vowing to present as burnt offering whoever meets him first after victory. Israel's freedom, God declares, will not be the result of Jephthah's ill-conceived oath, but the result of Israel's prayer.⁶⁹ Jephthah is portrayed as thoughtless and impulsive; God as powerful, controlled and cajoled by no one. God the character not only knows the future (e.g., that Jephthah's daughter will be the sacrifice) but causes the future.⁷⁰ The character of God is reliable—what he says will happen does indeed happen—and therefore to be trusted more than the character of Jephthah.

So what exactly does Jephthah say about Seila? He says she is well named. The rest of his speech is about his own feelings.⁷¹ We learn nothing about Seila's character, only Jephthah's self pity.

God, on the other hand, has quite a bit to say about Seila. God speaks after Seila visits the wise men, saying

Ecce nunc conclusi linguam sapientum populi mei in generationem istam, ut non possent respondere filie Iepte ad verbum eius, ut compleretur verbum meum, nec destrueretur consilium meum quod cogitaveram. Et ipsam vidi magis sapientem pre patre suo, et sensatam virginem pre omnibus qui hic sunt sapientibus. Et nunc detur anima eius in petitione eius, et erit mors eius preciosa ante conspectum meum omni tempore, et abiens decidet in sinum matrum suarum.

Behold now I have shut up the tongue of the wise men of my people in this generation so that they cannot respond to the word of Jephthah's daughter, in order that my word be fulfilled and my plan that I thought out not be foiled. I have seen that she is wiser than her father and that the virgin is smarter than all the wise men who are here. Now let her soul be given up in accord with her request, and her death will be precious before me always, and she will go and depart into the bosom of her mothers.

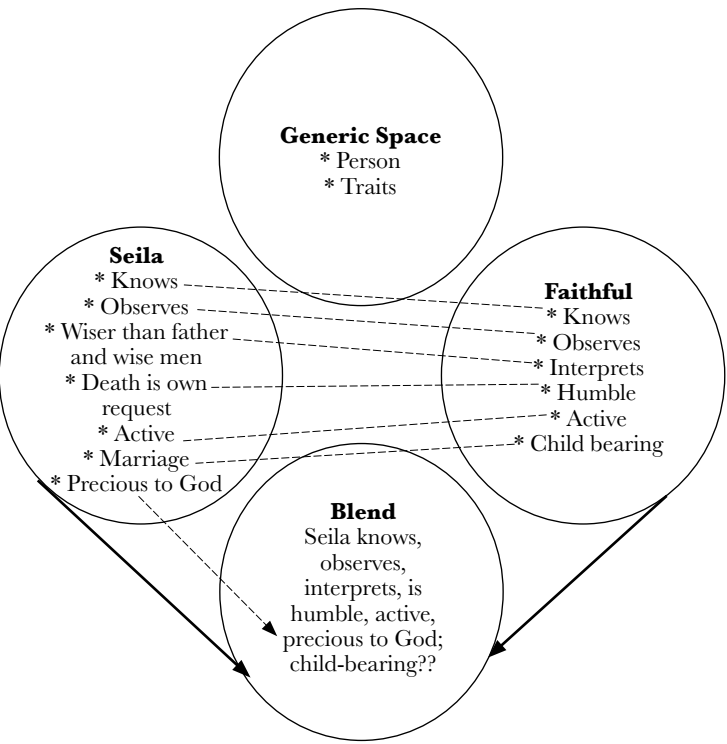
God presents very specific inputs to the blend that is Seila's character. Seila, according to God, is wiser than her father and smarter than the wise men. God sees her death as being the result of her request:

⁶⁹ In other words, God presents a different input to the blend that results in victory.

⁷⁰ See previous section on performative speech.

⁷¹ Jephthah is torn between joy at the victory and sorrow at the death of his daughter, and he knows he cannot take back his vow.

and Seila’s request is the same as God’s plan. Seila’s action is, not surprisingly, precious before God for all time. If we map what God says about Seila into the construction of Seila’s character, we see the following:



Blend: Seila’s Character⁷²

In this blend, Seila’s interpretation of tradition—that she must be willing to die—is affirmed by God’s declaration that she is wiser than her father and the wise men. And the fact that she gives herself “in accord with her request” gives us an answer to the question, “Is she dissembling about what causes her grief?” If she is willing, she cannot be lying. God is not fooled.

⁷² It is worth noticing that the gap between Seila’s grief over her virgin status and the “Faithful Jewish Woman” value of being a mother are not resolved.

Finally, we examine the words of the narrator regarding the attitudes and intentions of the character. As Alter says, we will know “what the characters feel, intend, desire; here we are accorded certainty.”⁷³ In other words, we know exactly how to complete the blend. So what does the narrator tell us about Seila’s intentions and attitudes? Nothing.

This is not an unusual situation in Pseudo-Philo. Often, when a comment is made about a character’s attitude or intentions, it is made by God rather than by the narrator. But let us return to this later; first, let us summarize what we have learned about Seila by looking at the blends triggered by her actions, description, speech, and other’s comments.

Seila clearly fits into the category “Faithful Jewish Women”, as long as we remember that this is a radial category. She is female, knows and observes scripture and tradition, and she interprets them correctly in her current situation. She is active, and active for the community. It appears that her concern for her father indicates humility. She seems indifferent to the question of children, being preoccupied with the marriage bed instead!

In addition, we learn that Seila is wise, that her desire coincides with God’s plan, and that she fits the model of only-begotten by being both precious and “dedicated” to God. In this, Seila is precious not only to her parent but also to God. Finally, we learn that Seila is buried by the virgins of Israel and mourned annually by the entire community. Seila’s sterling character is recognized not only by God but also by the Israelite community. Her death is equated with Isaac’s near-sacrifice.

3.7 DISCUSSION: THE LIMITS OF NARRATIVE RELIABILITY

I would argue that in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, God (the character) is a better and more reliable guide for discerning the nature of other characters than the narrator. It’s not that the narrator is wrong; it’s that the narrator is reserved, and incomplete in comparison. Yes, the narrator reports that no one can answer Seila: but it’s God who reveals why. In many places where one might reasonably wonder how someone’s actions are viewed (Gideon’s apostasy, Jephthah’s vow, Amram’s defiance of the elders, etc.), it is God the character, rather than the omniscient

⁷³ Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 117.

narrator, who steps in to comment. The narrator in Pseudo-Philo very rarely comments upon a character, with the exception of the character of God. Then the reader hears the narrator tells us that God is angry (*LAB* 39:11) or God is pleased (*LAB* 9:7).

One could argue that in the corresponding biblical story, the narrator is similarly reserved and incomplete. However, God also keeps his distance in Judges 11. No comment is made about Jephthah's vow, or Seila's death, by anyone in the biblical version.

While Alter holds that only the narrator can be fully trusted, I would argue that any remarks that God makes in the text of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* should be treated with the same level of reliability normally accorded an omniscient narrator. The narrator, of course, retains the ultimate power. The reader cannot know what God is doing and thinking without the narrator; even as the narrator "steps aside" in order to let God do the commenting, the narrator is still in charge. But God the character knows, or at least speaks of, things that the narrator recounts only in part, and it is normally left to the character of God to speak of someone's motivation or intention. Pseudo-Philo takes great effort to establish God as a reliable character (see above, 3.5.3.3 Drawing Attention, for a discussion of the correction of biblical capriciousness in God's behavior).

Why might the author of *LAB* choose to use the character of God in this way? I can see two reasons. First, Pseudo-Philo is primarily concerned with the stories in the book of Judges, stories where the narrator and God are remarkably silent regarding motivation of characters. So the "laconic" narrative mode is already present in the original text. This biblical book has much less character commentary than, for instance, 1 and 2 Kings. The text cries out for explication. But why should God, rather than the narrator, be the explicator?

Pseudo-Philo is engaged in the difficult balancing act of re-telling the biblical story, where novelty is introduced into tradition in an amount sufficient to make a new point or a good story but not sufficient to call the performance into question. Too much input from the narrator might draw too much attention to the narrator.

The original biblical narrator was historically assumed to be Moses; the author of the law was God. Already we learn from the text (*LAB* 25:13) that there are questions about the divine authorship of the law. Clearly, the author of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* could not claim to be Moses or any other of the ancient prophets. The author will always be in danger of being mistaken for the narrator; if one's authority is ques-

tionable, it is better to avoid questions of one's authority. So it makes sense that words are put into God's mouth rather than the mouth of the narrator. After all, quoting someone of high status is almost always more powerful than using one's own words, and God has the highest status possible.⁷⁴

It is instructive to see exactly where in the text God actually makes statements about characters. I would argue that a quote from God is frequently interjected at a point where, in the original text, a problem existed. For instance, God is pleased with Amram in *LAB* 9:7; in the original text, Moses' conception seems like a foolhardy risk only redeemed by the Pharaoh's daughter. Gideon's apostasy is not dealt with in the biblical text, but in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* God comments. Likewise Micah's behavior goes without comment in Judges, but not in *LAB*. And Saul's righteous behavior (getting rid of the wizards) instigates an observation by God on his underlying bad intentions and coming lapse.

By having God rather than the narrator comment, the author distances her/himself from the observation and any disagreement a reader might have about the interpretation inherent in the remark. As above, when one begins to question an authority's conclusions about someone's character, the consequence is not only a difference of opinion. When my blend doesn't work with your blend, I start looking for reasons why your blend is wrong, and your truthfulness or wisdom comes into question. An assessment attributed to God carries more authority than an assessment attributed to a narrator of possibly less than divine inspiration.

⁷⁴ See "4.2.5.2 Communion: Quotation" in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR

PERELMAN AND OLBRECHTS-TYTECA'S "NEW" RHETORIC THROUGH A COGNITIVE LENS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The term "rhetorical criticism" has been in vogue in biblical fields since 1968, when James Muilenburg made his famous address to the Society of Biblical Literature¹ calling for scholars to broaden their horizons beyond form criticism. Muilenburg argued that the field needed to incorporate a rhetorical approach, which concentrated on the artistic and affective construction of a given text, in addition to the form critical method. Form criticism had lost sight of the text as a whole, as a story which could be read and understood; a more complete picture of the text, Muilenburg argued, could be restored by thoughtful use of rhetorical analysis.

In the 30+ years since Muilenburg's lecture, numerous scholars have used "rhetorical" analysis to examine biblical texts. Much of their work has focused on the artistic features of texts: the repetition of words and scenes, word usage, structure, openings and closings of scenes, and so on. This focus on literary elements has provided considerable insight into biblical passages: for instance, previously ignored patterns and structures may be found to link sections that had been atomized by form or source analysis. Often, when one speaks of rhetorical criticism in biblical circles, what is actually meant is this kind of close reading of narrative, a focus on composition.

At the same time, another understanding of rhetoric has flourished in the scholarly world. *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* by Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca,² was published in English just one year after Muilenburg's address. Their approach to texts was significantly different than that of Muilenburg. While they also operated through a close reading of the text, these authors were concerned with

¹ James Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," *JBL* 88/1, 1–18.

² Translated by John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969).

rhetoric as argumentation rather than a principle of artistic construction. Rejecting the centuries-old belief that rhetoric was primarily concerned with the pleasing presentation of ideas, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca proposed that the main purpose of rhetoric is persuasion. They based their work in classical rhetorical theory but highlighted the aspects of argument structure and audience, setting aside the ancient focus on public speech and the attendant emphases on mnemonics, delivery, and effect. The move away from public speech allowed analysis to center on written texts. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca argued that texts, no less than public speeches, are designed for a specific audience, and when one understands the arguments being used in a text, it is possible to catch a glimpse of the audience for whom the writing was intended.³ With these lines of reasoning, they extended the use of rhetoric far beyond speech and even beyond texts which employ formal and systematic use of ancient categories, to encompass all language that attempts to persuade.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's work was seminal for any scholar who wished to examine the argumentation of a text. They not only spawned a generation of rhetorical studies, but their analysis continues to act as the basic text for the field.⁴

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca not only chose to emphasize rhetoric's reach into texts which are not classically rhetorical, but they also attempted to situate their work as a break with the kind of self-evident reasoning of scientific theory which followed in the wake of Descartes. Instead of examining arguments that can be reduced to mathematical proofs, they focused on argumentation that utilizes the concepts of probability, plausibility, and credibility—the argumentation involved in rhetorical persuasion. The study of “the discursive techniques [that] induce or increase the mind's adherence to . . . theses presented for its assent”⁵ was their goal. Distinguishing between establishing a truth and instilling adherence to that truth, they attended to adherence—how the thing written or said moves an audience to accept that thing as correct.

³ An excellent example of the application of this thesis to a biblical text is Antoinette Wire's *Corinthian Woman Prophets* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990) which uses rhetorical methodology to reconstruct the points of view *against* which Paul is arguing in his Corinthian letters.

⁴ As witnessed by the repeated re-printings of this tome—1969, 1971, 1975, 1978, 1984, 1988, 1991, 1996, and 2000.

⁵ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 4.

The authors noted that the theory of argumentation could have been considered under the discipline of psychology. But while they acknowledged the interesting features of psychological studies looking at, for instance, mass media and persuasion, they believed that scientific method cannot justly evaluate certain kinds of argumentation. This stems from their conviction that scientific argument can only proceed when it has been reduced to mathematical propositions and is therefore unable to justly examine cases which do not break down into such propositions.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca made the important observation that one's most solid beliefs are those which are accepted without proof. These arguments are rarely explicit in a text; instead, they act as background for the author and the author's intended audience. When one wishes to secure commitment to a particular point of view, "nothing is more reliable than external or internal experience and calculation conforming to previously admitted rules."⁶

A cognitive scientist, examining Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's arguments, would surely agree with several of their major points. What is referred to in *The New Rhetoric* as "adherence" to the truth of an argument is—for a cognitive scientist—recognition and acceptance of a blend, a process that progresses through both cultural and individual licensing. When Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca say that most solid beliefs are admitted without truth or explicit recognition, a cognitive scientist would affirm that the vast majority of cognitive blends operate at an unconscious level and, because of our lack of awareness, have a powerful ability to shape thinking. And when Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca say that the most effective arguments appeal to "external or internal experience and calculation conforming to previously admitted rules", a cognitive researcher would identify such experience and calculation as the employment of frames and blends previously—and successfully—used by the reader, and/or licensed by the reader's culture.

But a cognitive scientist would point out the essential flaw in Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's scheme. By relying on ancient rhetorical theory, one automatically assumes reliance on the philosophical theories that underpinned rhetoric. The notion of classical categories is essential to philosophy, and hence to rhetorical analysis; and indeed the

⁶ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 8.

voluminous nature of *The New Rhetoric* is due primarily to its attempt to provide extensive categorization of different kinds of rhetorical moves. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca struggle mightily to speak of the way that rhetorical devices make meaning, but their work is complicated by the classification needs of the project and the continual knowledge that a given device could easily move from one category to another. A cognitive linguistic approach, which focuses on division by function rather than class, allows one to sidestep the question of “What type of argument is this?” and ask instead, “How does this argument work cognitively? What is being said, and what is assumed, and how would a reader be expected to react?”

One other difficulty in Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s work must be pointed out. *The New Rhetoric*, written in 1958, preceded the bulk of the deconstruction and post-modernist literary movements. Hence, the assumption of self-evidence that pervades their work presents a difficulty for anyone who takes the idea of multiple readings seriously. To argue that an author “intends” to influence her audience by using a specific argument is not possible when critics can’t even agree if words have meaning.

Because their work is based on ancient philosophical standards, they have no significant way of combating these modern criticisms. And because their work precedes contemporary literary criticisms, modern critics can use their categories loosely, justifying their analysis as a rhetorical reading, while at the same time admitting things that Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca would likely have rejected. For instance, the article by Donald Polaski critiqued at the end of this chapter purports to be a rhetorical examination, but Polaski’s analysis veers away from the text into 21st century terms and issues without overt acknowledgement, and at times chooses obscure rather than more general readings. A cognitive analysis would not permit addressing the whole wide range of possible meaning, as Polaski does, but rather focuses on the meaning that an author is most likely trying to present.

The grounding of cognitive linguistic analysis in the scientific world—a grounding rejected by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca⁷—presents a way to argue against the assumptions and claims of postmodern and

⁷ Of course, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca did not have the findings of cognitive linguistic research available to them 45 years ago, and so their decision is understandable. The same decision in today’s academic world is not viable.

deconstructionism. Cognitive research is measurable, physical, and physiological. Certain physiological structures are virtually universal in human beings, and those structures give rise to neural blends that also appear to be close to universal. Cognitive linguistic research is in a particularly powerful position to support as well as critique the findings of rhetorical analysis. This chapter will do just that.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca intend, in their work, to order and sort "different argumentative structures" and then to analyze how effective these arguments are.

From a cognitive science perspective, the analysis they intend is actually an examination of the cognitive blends invoked by particular linguistic usage, and an assessment of how well those blends use culturally approved frames and blends to argue a particular point. This chapter will proceed by examining the rhetorical examples as seen by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, dissecting such examples in the language and mode of cognitive linguistics, and then showing where the two disciplines differ or agree.

The analysis of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's findings will be followed by an applied experiment: a cognitive reading will be contrasted with a rhetorical reading by a contemporary author. This analysis will show how the questions of categories and modern criticism present problems for a rhetorical examination that can be evaded by using a cognitive linguistic approach.

4.1.1 *How Pseudo-Philo Works Rhetorically*

Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum frequently inserts speeches into the mouths of biblical characters; these are normally presented as the oration of an individual who is attempting to persuade his or her community to behave in a certain way. In effect, there are two layers of persuasion active simultaneously: at the level of the story, where the character is addressing other characters, and at the level of the text, where Pseudo-Philo uses the arguments of the characters to address the reader.

If indeed the assumption holds that the arguments in the speeches are intended to address not only the audience "in the book" but also the book's readers, *LAB*'s speeches could demonstrate what points of view Pseudo-Philo is arguing against, what shared beliefs are assumed and central to the community, and who counts as an authority.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca acknowledge that to interpret another's words,

... [to] supply the missing links ... is always very risky. Indeed it is nothing more than a plausible hypothesis to assert that the real thought of the speaker and of his hearers coincides with the structure which we have just isolated ... in most cases, moreover, we are simultaneously aware of more than just one way of conceiving the structure of an argument ... there is no reason why a single statement cannot be regarded as capable of expressing several schemes which would act at the same time on the minds of different persons—even on a single hearer. It is possible, moreover, that these schemes are effective without being clearly perceived and that only an attempt at clarification, which is rarely performed, would enable the speaker, and especially his hearers, to become aware of the mental schemes which they are using or which are acting upon them ... [T]aken out of an actual context, in which all the elements of the rhetorical situation are blended, they appear with greater clarity. We can be assured, moreover, that, if we recognize them as argument, it is because they correspond to familiar patterns.⁸

They assert both the truth that argument can be effective without being conscious, and the claim that any analysis of arguments is a hypothetical act, and that other, possibly equally appropriate analyses could be made. While this may be true in rhetorical investigation, it is not necessarily true when an argument is submitted to the scrutiny of cognitive methods, since cognitive linguistics deals with how the argument proceeds, rather than the category to which it belongs. This chapter will argue, in part, that the divisions into which Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca have sorted arguments do not imply the necessity of different cognitive analyses; the same cognitive mapping is applicable whether one calls something an argument from authority or an analogy.

4.1.2 *Divisions in The New Rhetoric*

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca separate their analysis of argumentation into two general categories: the starting point, or premises of the argument, and the techniques of argumentation. While they recognize that premises are rarely without argumentative value, they separate them for consideration. The premise—starting point—presupposes that the audience agrees with the speaker. But because of the starting point's argumentative value, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca distinguish three different ways in which this presupposition inspires acceptance—or rejection—by the reader: agreement, choice, and presentation.

⁸ Perelman and Olbrecht-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 187–88.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca break argumentative techniques into two large categories. The arguments from association include quasi-logical arguments and arguments from reality, arguments to establish reality through cases, analogy, metaphor, and so on. Alternatively, there are arguments from dissociation.

In the sections following, I will follow Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's divisions and offer a cognitive linguistic interpretation of their categories of argument. In places where the rhetorical analysis differs from the cognitive analysis, I will specify those differences. It is my premise that virtually every rhetorical form, regardless of the label or classification given by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, can be reduced to one of three blending scenarios: the introduction of a cultural frame, a counterfactual comparison, and the inclusion of a radial or central category as an input. While some blends may involve multiple inputs, they are all susceptible to analysis through these methods.

4.2 OPENING PREMISES

4.2.1 *Opening Premises: Agreement*

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca argue that facts and truths are often used as opening premises; both are believed to refer to objective reality, though truths refer to more complex systems made up of individual facts, such as religious or scientific theories.⁹ Presumptions and values, likewise, can be admitted as premises. In the case of presumptions, hearers will expect these presumptions to be reinforced during the argument. Values will reflect the commitments of a particular group and can either be concrete—that is, attached to a living entity or specific group like “linguists”—or abstract, such as truth or right.¹⁰

In their discussion of agreements, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca also argue that abstract and concrete hierarchies may be used as starting points for argumentation (such as the superiority of God over humans). *Loci* of quantity, quality, order, the existing, essence, and the

⁹ One can refuse to recognize the speaker's assertion as a fact; and “mere questioning of a statement is . . . sufficient to destroy (its status as fact).” Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 68.

¹⁰ Both usages are group specific. In the first case, the value “cognitive linguist” will differ depending on whether you are dealing with devotees of Noam Chomsky or George Lakoff. In the second, the value for “truth” will reflect a given group's understanding of the term.

person can serve as starting points for argument, as can the agreements of special audiences, such as those who have technical language and findings of their own.

When one examines Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's schema from a cognitive perspective, one notices immediately that these agreements involve culturally licensed frames; a fact, a truth, a premise, a value, or a particular *locus* each invoke a larger cognitive realm which is specific to a culture. For instance, when Kenaz begins his first address in *LAB* 25:3 with, "You know how often Moses the beloved of God commanded you not to transgress the law..." (*Scitis quanta vobis mandavit Moyses amicus Domini, ut non transgrediamini legem...*), this statement qualifies as fact to a special audience: the audience of Israelites who knew the history of Moses and his pronouncements. The remark also invokes a value (the law should not be transgressed), another fact (Moses was beloved of God), and a premise (you know this information).

Cognitively, these fit into an overall cultural frame which we might label "Moses and the Law"; like other frames, it is an abundantly productive cognitive construction which brings to mind a host of concepts: the giving of the law, the tablets which were broken, the apostasy of the golden calf, Moses' work as judge for the community, etc. The term "transgression" also introduces the entire biblical history of individuals and communities flouting God and breaking the law. A cognitive perspective would re-conceptualize Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's list of "agreements" as the invocation of culturally accepted frame(s), which the audience/readers knows and understands. The introduction of the frame provides a wealth of material which will serve as inputs to the blends that follow it.

The opening statement of Amram in *LAB* 9:3 also uses a culturally accepted frame.

Celerius est ut in victoria minuatur seculum aut in immensurabile mundus concidat aut cor abissi astra contingant, quam genus filiorum Israel minuatur.

Sooner will the world be destroyed forever or the universe sink into the immeasurable or the heart of the deep touch the stars than that the race of the sons of Israel will be destroyed.

Amram, instead of beginning with reference to a biblical story, invokes the nature of the universe. The reader need not be a member of a special group, but just a normal human being who can recognize the commonly agreed upon "facts" of how the universe works. The generalized frame that this statement invokes would include cultural

knowledge about the permanence of the natural world, the enormous distance between stars and the ocean, and so on. These are facts and truths known to anyone with common sense. These opening premises could also be understood as *loci* of essence, whereby that which exists is superior to that which is not possible.

By conjuring up three impossible scenarios, Amram sets the scene for his argument about God's behavior. In this speech, the introduction of the frame of the natural world is not just an opening premise but also serves as immediate argumentation. Because his statements are structured as improbable possibilities—sooner will this happen than that—the reader is immediately swept into considering counterfactual arguments.

In 39:5, Jephthah begins his long argument against the Israelites by comparing himself to God. He says,

Deus potest peccatorum nostrorum memor non esse, qui havel tempus et locum ubi requiescat a longanimitate sua tamquam Deus; ego autem, mortalis et de terra factus in quam reversurus sum, ubi proiciam iram meam et iniuriam qua nocuistis me?

God can be unmindful of our sins, for he has the time and place in which he as God may restrain himself as a result of his long-suffering; but I, a mortal man and made from the dust to which I will return, where shall I cast off my wrath and the injury that you have done me?

Jephthah is using the *loci* of order, in which the cause—God—is always superior to that which proceeded from the cause. One could also understand this as a concrete hierarchy wherein a divine being is superior to a human being.

But when we examine the entire statement, we see that Jephthah's opening premise also involves the reader as a special audience—someone who would understand the biblical references to being made from dust. This special audience shares a cultural frame wherein the relationship of God to human is creator to created. This is considered a fact, or truth, in Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's schema;¹¹ for a cognitive linguist, it is a datum on a rich cultural frame called up by the references to God as creator and humans as dust.¹²

¹¹ Not that they themselves consider this a fact, but that they would argue that the author has presented it as a fact.

¹² Like the opening statement of Amram's argument, this statement by Jephthah introduces counterfactual reasoning. The *loci* of order, or a concrete hierarchy, will necessarily involve a comparison between two things: in this case, the comparison between those who are able to forgive and those who are not.

In each of these cases, then, where we have looked at how speeches begin—at the writer’s attempt to structure agreement to an opening premise—we see that, regardless of the rhetorical label used, the cognitive technique remains the same: the invocation of a cultural frame.

4.2.2 *Opening Premises: Choice*

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca next address the part played by the selection of certain elements for use in the premise, and the ways that those elements are modified for the purpose of the argument. This is what they refer to as “choice” in their section on premises.

When Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca discuss the selection of an element as the premise for an argument, they note that choosing certain facts (and simultaneously and necessarily excluding others) indicates that these are both pertinent and important facts.¹³ They have “presence”. The authors describe “presence” as psychological reality, which need not be based on concrete reality or temporal closeness; a rhetor’s role is to employ “verbal magic” which introduces or enhances things previously absent or under-noticed. They note that this accentuation of a particular notion “leads to the inevitable conclusion that all argumentation is selective. It chooses the elements and the method of making them present.”¹⁴

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s understanding of the use of data conforms closely to the cognitive scientific analysis of mental construction. Where they speak of “presence”, a cognitive linguist would point out that repeated reference causes repeated activation of a neural path. The psychological reality to which Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca refer is the result of a physiological reality. Even the mention of a single datum makes that datum available as an input to the larger blend, e.g. the argument at hand. And the introduction of data cannot be easily reversed; the facts become part of the cognitive process already underway, the neural pathways are activated.

In our examples above, it is clear that certain facts from the frames are being highlighted or chosen—to use rhetorical language, given “presence”—while others are being ignored. The invocation of the story of Moses and the Law, in the speech by Kenaz, does not bring

¹³ So also George Lakoff and Mark Johnson note that every time one chooses the source domain for a metaphor, one is both highlighting and obscuring details of the target domain. *Metaphors We Live By* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago; 1980) 10–13.

¹⁴ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 119.

forward certain parts of the story—for instance, the illumination of Moses' face so that no one could look at him. This fact is ignored, while other facts relating to transgression are highlighted. In Amram's arguments, we hear about the stability of the natural world but not, for instance, about reproduction and death in the natural world. And in Jephthah's statement, creation from dust is brought to our attention but not the story of creation from the rib. The introduction of an opening premise—in cognitive language, a cultural frame—will necessarily involve selective highlighting of parts of the frame.

For Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, premises are not only selected, but they are presented by means of certain techniques. These techniques determine interpretation: all data must be interpreted but the level at which that interpretation occurs can be disputed. There is only absolute clarity when all parties to the argument agree to limit its context. Otherwise, one can re-interpret infinitely, depending on the context in which one considers the data. Qualifiers, such as epithets or even garden-variety classification, limit the context in which one considers data, and can often predetermine the conclusion of the argument (or, more accurately, the conclusion which the author wants the reader to reach). Even when classification does not result in a technically developed class, it is tendentious and tends to push other possible classifications into the background: it is an interpretation.

This assertion by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca that there are an infinite number of levels of interpretation possible and that context shapes meaning is borne out by cognitive blending theory. Cognitively speaking, the multiple levels of interpretation possible result from the fact that a mental construction is always dependent on the inputs to the blend. When one changes one of the inputs—that is, the context in which one considers the data—then the final blend must also change. This is the same mental process by which an epithet or categorization changes the meaning of a given word, phrase, or argument. Like level of interpretation and context, an epithet or categorization acts as an input to a blend. The resulting blend must take into account the material of the input.

In one area of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's discussion of choice, a cognitive linguist might quibble with their assessment that "every conceptual thought is inserted into frameworks that are already completely formed..."¹⁵ One needs to ask just what they mean by "completely formed". It is true that cognitive frames, those highly

¹⁵ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 127.

complex and rich blends present and available for mental consideration in every culture, have considerable structure. But if one conceives of “completely formed” as meaning unalterable or rigid, their conjecture cannot be right. Thoughts, words, phrases, even cultural frames: all are only inputs to blends. Every conceptual thought is capable of alteration through the process of blending. This explains, for example, how the complex cultural frame of “natural law” can be used to argue about something that is clearly not an example of natural law in the following example.

LAB 9:3 shows the use of category and selective level of interpretation. Amram’s argument here is framed as a response to the elders’ directive that all Israelites must refrain from marital relations because the Egyptians have threatened to kill or enslave their children. In order to examine the level of interpretation in his response, one must first examine the level of interpretation in the elder’s discourse.

The elders end their instruction to the community with the summation, “For it is better to die without children, until we know what God does.” (*Melius est enim sine filiis mori, donec sciamus quid faciat Deus.*) In rhetorical parlance, this statement contains an argument by comparison. The elders believe that dying without children is preferable to some other situation; in linguistic terms, they have set before the community a counterfactual choice. That “other”, unstated in this sentence, was the main subject of discussion heretofore: the death, enslavement, and apostasy of their children. Death, enslavement, and apostasy will be automatically inserted by the listener or reader as the line is comprehended.¹⁶

With the addition of the last phrase, “until we know what God does,” the entire sentence functions as a maxim, or value judgment, on the social situation. This maxim implies that the Hebrews should wait, rather than initiate any action. In their minds, the next move is up to God. But Amram responds by saying,

Celerius est ut in victoria minuatursaeculum aut in inmensurabile mundus concidat aut cor abissi astra contingant, quam genus filiorum Israel minuaturs.

¹⁶ The cognitive blends behind their reasoning can be found in “Time Out of Joint” in chapter 6; however, I wish to point out here that the omission of the alternative outcome in this comparison requires the reader to “fill in the blanks”; thus the bad outcome is provided by the reader, unconsciously, rather than by the elders. This unaware and personal reiteration of the elders’ fear serves to reinforce it in the reader’s mind.

Sooner will the world be destroyed forever or the universe sink into the immeasurable or the heart of the deep touch the stars than that the race of the sons of Israel will be destroyed.

In this reply, Amram has interpreted the argument of the elders at a different level. Their attempt to prevent death and apostasy for their children by avoiding reproduction has been carried to the furthest extreme; it has been re-framed. The temporary threat from Egypt becomes permanent and absolute, and the temporary prevention of offspring becomes permanent childlessness. Amram has reinterpreted both the elders' fear of Egyptian actions and their solution, so that both result in the same catastrophe: the end of Israel. Whereas the elders suggest waiting (presumably, a short period) to see what God does to correct a difficult situation, he reads their suggestion as a claim of abandonment by God forever. Amram re-categorizes the remarks of the elders, and changes temporary abstinence and suffering into permanent and irreversible destruction of the Jewish race. And by having established this kind of category—permanent destruction of something—he then goes on to elicit three examples of wildly impossible natural destruction for comparison.

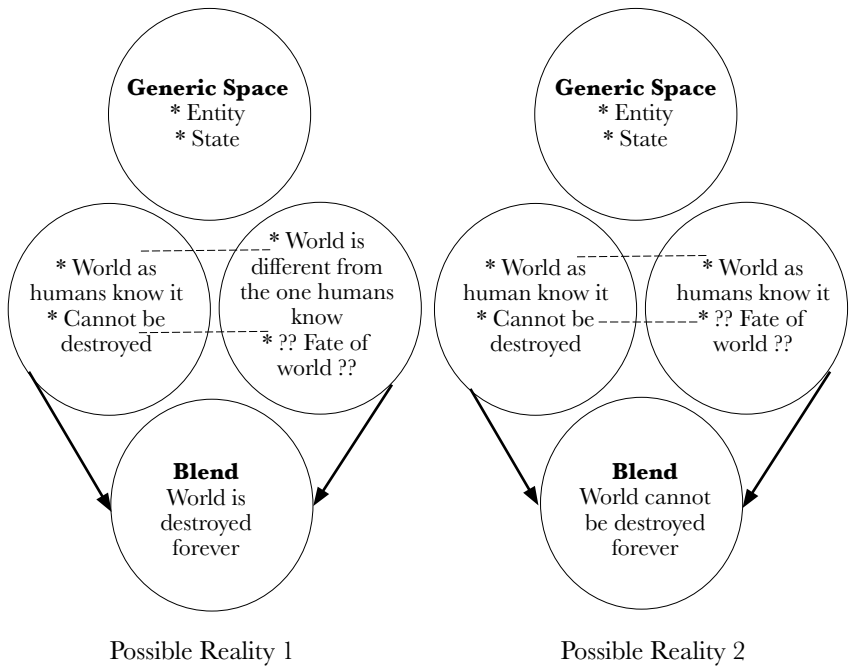
Cognitive linguists would generally agree with Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's discussion of the effect of classification. When one treats two objects, ideas, etc. in the same way, say Olbrechts-Tyteca and Perelman, they "form a class... (because) they react on each other in the hearer's mind."¹⁷ This is precisely the description of a set of mental blends where there is a standard, or constant, input that is combined with each new object or idea.

In Amram's opening lines, the constant input or class is "improbable natural disasters." The three impossible occurrences he introduces are, he claims, more likely to occur than that which his opponents' fear. These three scenarios are each illustrations of natural phenomena; he thus equates the end of Israel with natural events. The categorization attempts to show that the elders' fear is incompatible with the nature of things.¹⁸

From a cognitive perspective, the mental processes in the argument represent a series of counterfactual blends, the results of which become the inputs for a double scope blend. We begin first with the counterfactual blends offered by the text.

¹⁷ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 129.

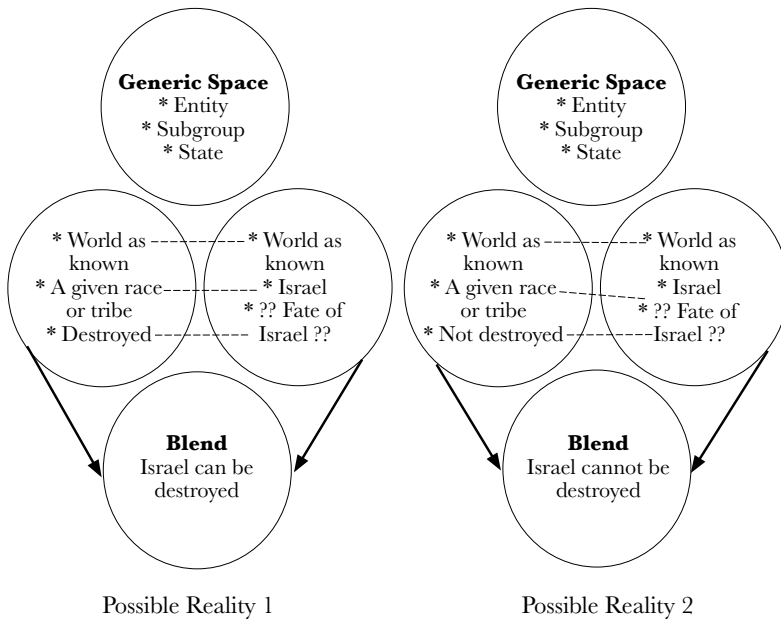
¹⁸ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 195–6.



Each of the three natural arguments represents a counterfactual scenario where some physical phenomena can or cannot occur. The reader’s experience of the natural world requires that she or he choose the blend that conforms to that reality. The conclusions—the blends chosen from these counterfactual pairs—become the inputs for comparison.

This diagram is the cognitive analysis of the counterfactual thinking of the first argument: the world can be destroyed forever. In the left hand diagram, the reader has to imagine a world unlike any world with which the reader has had experience, in order to conceive of a situation in which it might be destroyed. The right hand diagram represents a more familiar reality, where the world has never been destroyed. Since the reader has no first-hand knowledge of an existence where the world can be destroyed forever, the first blend is rejected and the blend representing “normal” reality is selected.

The same kind of counterfactual thinking is present in the next two arguments about the likelihood of the universe disappearing and the heart of the ocean touching the stars. In each case, knowledge of the natural world dictates which of the counterfactuals is selected. Knowledge of the natural world, over time and multiple examples, becomes natural law, a cognitive frame available for reasoning.



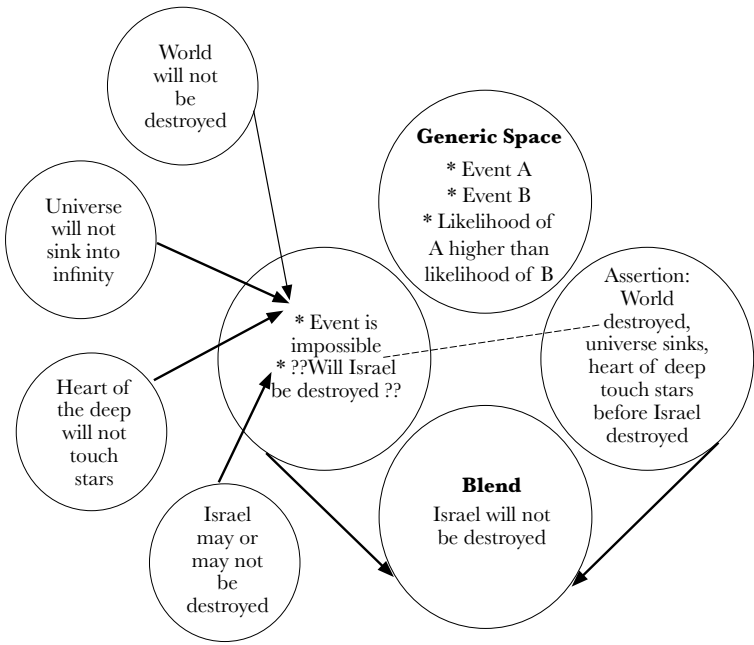
But, of course, the counterfactual possibilities are not so clear when one examines the issue raised by the elders and reinterpreted by Amram, "Israel will be destroyed."

Even though Amram has exaggerated the elder's argument, it is still possible to imagine a world where some group of people no longer existed. A first century worldview would encompass stories about the annihilation of different groups of people through war, famine, and disease. In this case, natural law does not dictate that only one of these answers is correct; either is reasonable in the real world, as it is known.

But because Amram has connected this scenario to the three examples above, we are given direction about how to solve the problem. Since it is impossible that any of the three natural phenomena occur, and because Pseudo-Philo has constructed the argument by making the fate of Israel a matter of natural law comparable to the other inputs, the reader is pointed forcefully to the conclusion that Israel cannot be destroyed.

The schematic diagram of the final blend would look like this:

In the final diagram’s generic space, we have the question of whether an event will occur. In one input space, we have the statement that certain things are more likely than others. In the other input space, we have the “facts” as they have been presented by Pseudo-Philo. The blended space yields the conclusion that the destruction of Israel cannot occur, because it is less likely than three things that are impossible according to natural law. The argument has been designed to lead us to this conclusion. While a reader may or may not accept this argument, it is clear what cognitive blends Pseudo-Philo intends the reader to employ.



Amram’s Reasoning

A rhetorical examination would classify this argument as an argument that utilizes classification to make its point. However, that is not strictly what has happened, as one can see. In reality, a “classification” was evoked which did not necessarily fit the material being argued. To call this situation “classification” somehow implies that the datum in question was already part of some given class.

What actually happened in the argument was not simply a matter of choosing among a list of possible classifications that were somehow inherent in the content; it was a matter of imposing a chosen structure on a situation. The cognitive analysis shows that what actually hap-

pened was that a certain category was introduced, used repeatedly, and applied to the situation under discussion. Repeated prior usage made its application seem more logical—or at least normative—when one finally examined the situation under consideration.

4.2.3 *Opening Premises: Presentation*

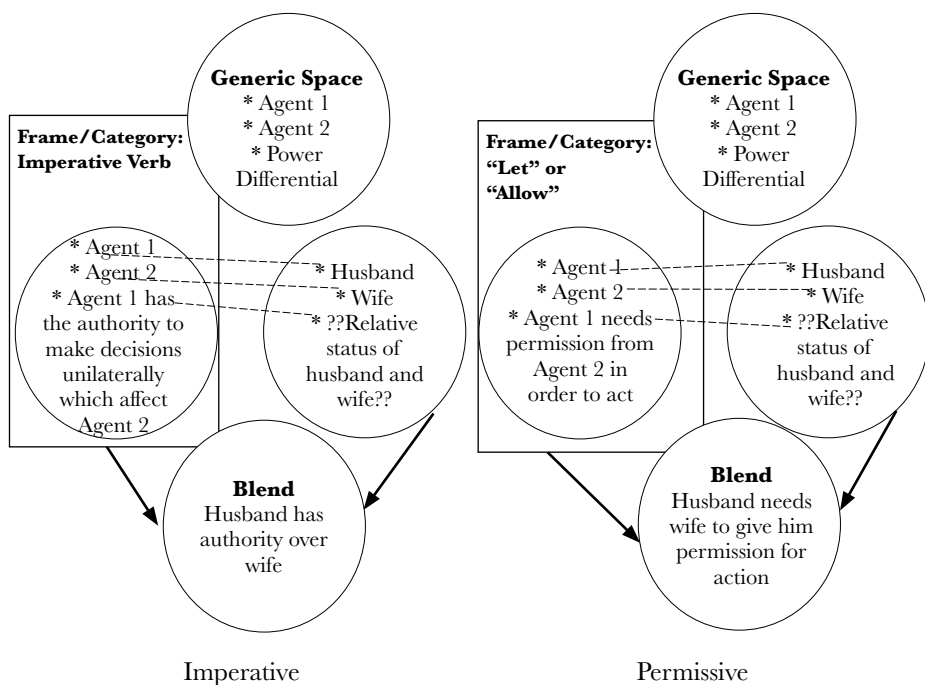
Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca state that before any argument can be made from a particular premise, “the content . . . should stand out against the undifferentiated mass of available elements of agreement . . .”¹⁹ In their third chapter, they attempt to parse forms from content, to show how the use of a particular form emphasizes certain aspects of the material presented. From a cognitive perspective, this means that a given form must activate a cognitive frame, whose input is incorporated into the blend; this frame does not alter the content of the other inputs but somehow alters their relationship.

An example of this concept can be found in the first verse of *LAB* 42. Manoah and Elumah, Samson’s parents, are arguing about who is responsible for the lack of children in their marriage. Manoah say to his wife, “Now let me take another wife so that I do not die without offspring.” (*Nunc dimitte me ut accipiam aliam mulierem, ne moriar sine fructu.*)

The facts (inputs) have to do with taking another wife in order to have children. But this could be expressed in any number of ways. Manoah could say, “I am taking another wife . . .” or “I am going to take another wife . . .” or “I want to take another wife . . .” Each of these yields a slightly different sense of the action and the personalities involved. But using *dimitto*, which has the sense of allowing or releasing, rather than forcing, and using it as an imperative, yields a particularly odd passage. Manoah commands his wife; but he commands her to give him permission. The forms used hint at a kind of incapacity. He is the male, the husband, and he employs the linguistic form—the imperative—of a husband who has authority. But the verb he employs implies servitude.

In cognitive as well as rhetorical analysis, one must assume that not only the person and number of a verb is important, but also tense, aspect, voice, and mood. It is most likely that these features of language fit into an overall frame—that imperatives carry with them a subconscious frame which tells the listener something about the authority differential between the speaker and the one spoken to.

¹⁹ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 142.



Likewise, words and phrases will bring with them the history of how they are used—a frame, or category, as outlined in chapter 3 in the section on repetition.

When we diagram these two inputs from common cultural frames, or categories, into blends involving Manoah and Elumah, we see that they give us contradictory conclusions. In both cases, the category addresses a situation where there is a power differential between people. But in one blend, the husband appears to have the authority; in the other, authority seems to belong to the wife. The use of these two forms simultaneously in the imperative form of *dimitte me* establishes an unsolvable contradiction.

At times (at least in English) the imperative use of a word connoting permission may be used to imply politeness on the speaker's part, as when one clearly has the power to do something but will not do it if another objects. "Allow me to take your coat," and "Let me pay for this," are good examples of this usage. But the fact that Manoah uses this "polite" form in the middle of a squabble that is repeated daily leads one to believe that he has allowed his husbandly authority to be checked by his wife's objections. The language structure hints at a rela-

tionship where the presumptive dominance of the husband is thwarted by the real life relationship between the spouses. The implications of this language form for deciphering the relationship between Manoah and Elumah will be explored further in the next section.

4.2.4 *Opening Premises: Specificity and Emotion*

The New Rhetoric notes that in order to incite an emotional response, language must be concrete and specific. Surely this is a phenomenon of basic categories, where the things which are central to categories are those things which exist at human scale, available for physical contact and manipulation.²⁰ It is this human scale which makes God's anger at Jephthah so immediate when he says, "Now if a dog should meet Jephthah first, will the dog be offered to me?"²¹ The line would unquestionably lose its emotional potency if it read, "Now if an animal should meet Jephthah first, will the animal be offered to me?" "Animal" is the next step up in a category where "dog" is central; the next step down could be "Fido." The more specific word "Fido" runs the risk of the reader thinking, "I don't know Fido." A less specific word such as "animal" leaves one imagining any number of creatures and wondering which it will be. With the word "dog", the frame "Dog (of ancient times)" is activated. The knowledge that dogs ran in packs throughout cities, licked up the blood of Jezebel in the biblical story, fought and killed other animals, and ate carrion is thus brought to the blend. This frame heightens the inappropriateness of a dog as the sacrificial offering to God.

4.2.4.1 *Opening Premises: Specificity and Emotion: Abstraction*

While absolute figures have more emotional impact, they present difficulties in argumentation. Sometimes, an argument must be made abstractly in order to encourage agreement. So Seila responds to her father, when he grieves the vow that will result in her death: "Who is there who would be sad to die, seeing the people freed?" (*Et quis est qui tristetur moriens, videns populum liberatum?*) She does not go so far as to claim that she is not sad, which would be hard to believe; rather she evokes a universal and abstract picture that is easier to agree with.

²⁰ See the section on categories in Chapter Two.

²¹ LAB, 39:11: *Et nunc si canis primum obviamerit Iepte, numquid canis offeretur mihi?*

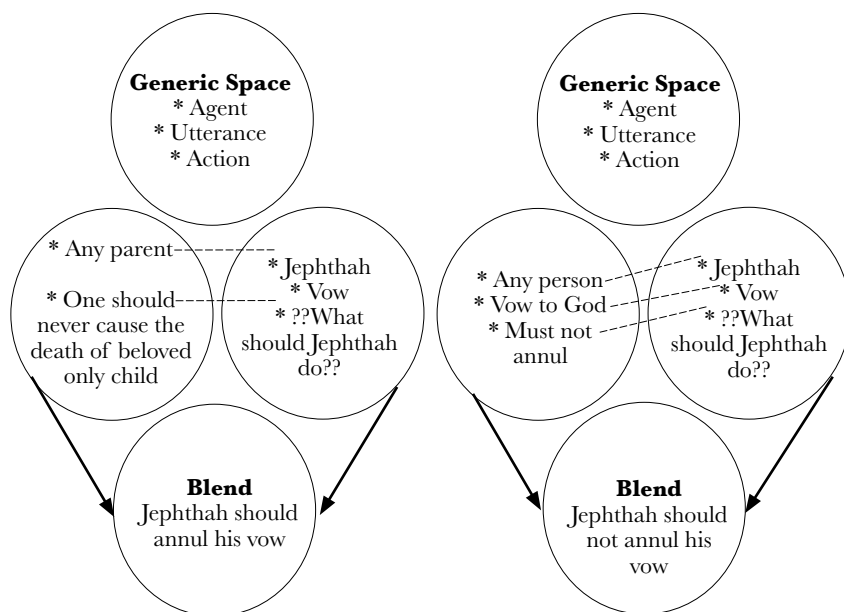
The differences between abstract and concrete figures are, again, the differences between inputs. In the quote above, the cognitive blend is formed using an input with an unspecified person whose community has been freed from oppression and who is now facing death for some vague reason, rather than the input of a young girl named Seila who is going to be sacrificed by her father because of his thoughtless vow.

The use of a term that departs from the general tenor of the discussion—as in this example with Seila and Jephthah—surely indicates “argumentative intent”, as Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca point out. From a linguistic perspective, such a switch in level of discussion—from first person to third person—indicates a change in the inputs to a blend. Any attempt to alter another’s blend—that is, present a different view of reality—is certainly an argumentative move.

4.2.4.2 *Opening Premises: Specificity and Emotion: Negative and Positive Presentation*

The presentation of an argument can be expressed either positively or negatively. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca believe that when a negative presentation is made, it must be a response to a real or assumed positive presentation. Thus when Seila tells her father, “Now do not annul anything you have vowed...” (*[e]t nunc omnia que orasti non destruas...*), her statement brings to mind the possibility that her father is contemplating such an annulment. However, nothing else in the text tells us that he is. By introducing the idea, Seila’s character gains in stature vis-à-vis her father, as she is seen as more faithful than he (i.e., more willing to fulfill a vow to God). In cognitive linguistic terms, a negative statement is a counterfactual, and by definition, the positive is present also. In this case, “Now do not annul anything you have vowed...” would be diagrammed as a set of counterfactual blends.

In this instance, the argument has given us the blend, and we mentally supply an input. Seila’s statement introduced two different cultural values—that one should not endanger the life of one’s beloved and only child, and that one should always fulfill one’s vows to God. By saying that her father must not annul his vow, she raises and rejects the possibility of non-fulfillment, without ever having to state it directly. Obedience to God is more important than family continuity.



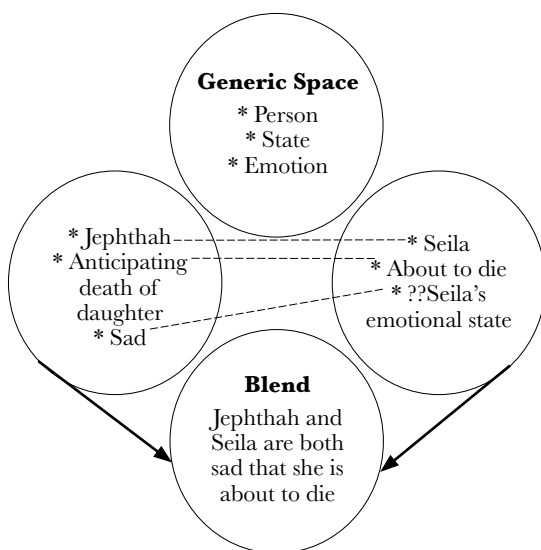
Counterfactual: Risking Child versus Fulfilling Vows

4.2.4.3 *Opening Premises: Specificity and Emotion: Interrogative*

According to Olbrechts-Tyteca and Perelman, the use of the interrogative “presupposes an object to which it relates and suggests that there is agreement on the existence of this object.”²² A question may also be a way of expressing a belief, or a simple judgment. But from a cognitive linguistic framework, a question is a counterfactual. “Are you well?” introduces mental spaces of wellness and ill health. “Who is there who would be sad to die, seeing the people freed?” introduces a more complex set of mental spaces which include counterfactuals.

LAB 40:1 expresses Jephthah’s sorrow, but also implies that Seila is distressed by her impending death. While Jephthah does not say this explicitly, this option is cognitively possible because Seila’s later arguments specifically reject it.

²² Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 159.

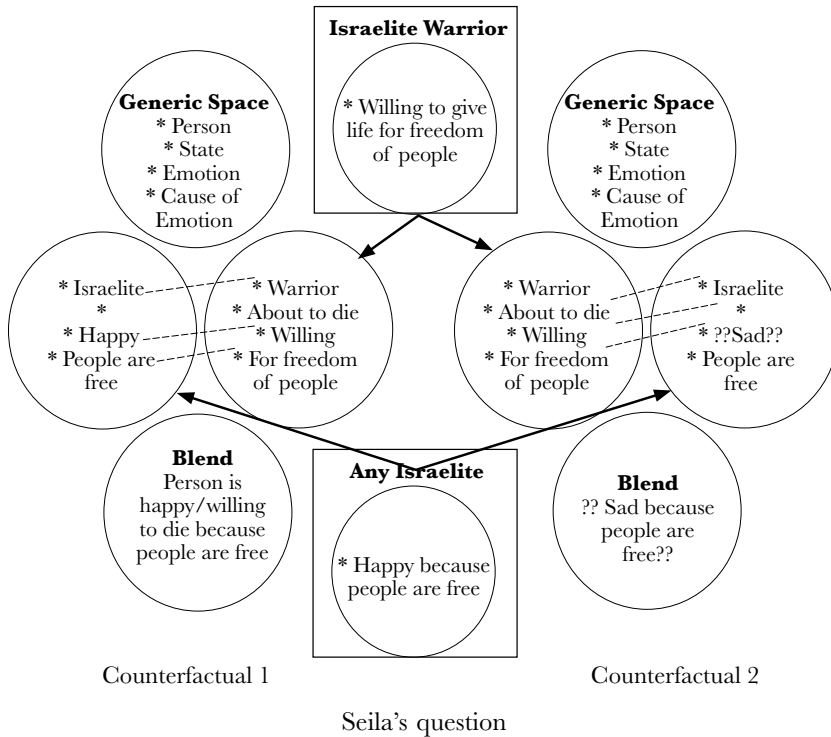


Blend suggested by Jephthah's lament (rejected by Seila)

Seila's response uses a slight enlargement of the generic space assumed by her father's remarks, and introduces two new cultural frames—the frame of a person who rejoices when her or his community has been freed from oppression, as well as the frame of a person who is willing to die on behalf of his or her people. These would make sense to the reader: warriors were expected to give their lives willingly to protect the people, and freedom from outside oppression was the great good for Israel.²³

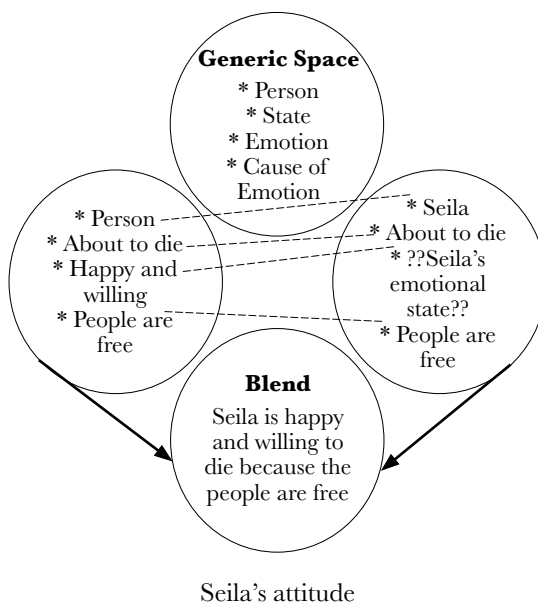
Since Seila's statement takes the form of a question, the mental space prompted for is a counterfactual, and hence its opposite is also invoked; but Seila's language serves to show the reader that the opposite should be rejected. "Who is there who could feel X?" implies that no one in his or her right mind could.

²³ Jephthah, who was a "valiant warrior" in the beginning of *LAB* 39, is now replaced by his daughter who is acting the part of the valiant warrior.



The inputs to the blends are linked through identity since they both involve freedom of the people, though in one it is a cause of happiness and in the other it is the reason to give one's life. The cognitive blend conflates the two internal states—rejoicing at the people's freedom, and the willingness to die.

The diagram on the left shows the mental blend constructed by Seila's opening line. The blend on the right is not possible, at least using the inputs provided. Pseudo-Philo intends for the reader to reject it. The appropriate mental space evoked by the left hand blend is then blended with Seila's own situation, which gives us the following:



In this case, Seila's use of the interrogative does indeed assume agreement on the part of the reader about how the argument should be viewed, and it masks any alternative view of the situation.

4.2.5 *Opening Premises: Figures*

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca argue that rhetorical figures are present when there is a “discernible structure, independent of the content . . . and a use that is different from the normal manner of expression and, consequently, attracts attention.”²⁴ Under their definition, figures of style are only figures of argumentation if they bring about a change in perspective. It is not possible to determine in advance if a construction is functioning as an argumentative figure, since one must wait to see if it brings about a new point of view.

Their examination of figures includes examples of choice, presence, and communion. The use of oratorical definition (a figure of choice) is covered elsewhere when we discuss how, when a particular frame is evoked, the author chooses to emphasize only certain aspects of that frame. (See Amram's use of “covenant” in the following example.)

²⁴ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 168.

The figure of presence can be evoked by repetition, which is analyzed cognitively in the previous chapter on narrative. In this section, I will look at two figures of communion, allusion and quotation.

4.2.5.1 *Opening Premises: Figures of Communion: Allusion*

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca argue that allusion, the reference to a culturally known and cherished figure, incident, fact, or custom without actually naming the person or spelling out the thing involved, is always contextual. According to rhetorical theory, allusion serves to establish communion between a speaker and an audience: when the speaker evokes a common cultural fact that is peculiar to a specific group, the speaker gains prestige because he is "in possession of this treasure, and able to utilize it."²⁵ A good example of allusion from Pseudo-Philo occurs in Amram's speech at 9:3.

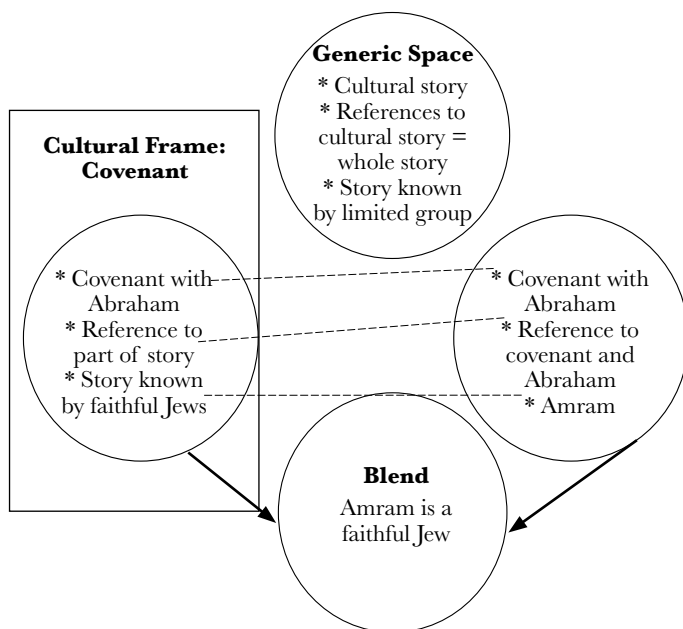
Et erit cum impletum fuerit testamentum, quod disponens Deus locutus est ad Abraham dicens: Habitando habitabunt nati tui in terra non sua, et servitutem redigentur et affligentur annis CCCC.

Some day the covenant will be fulfilled, that he established with Abraham and said, "Your sons will surely dwell in a land not their own and will be reduced to slavery and afflicted 400 years."

Amram begins by referring to the covenant God established with Abraham. In Genesis 15, God tells Abraham that his descendants will be oppressed in a foreign land; in Genesis 17 God promises to multiply Abraham's descendants upon the earth and give them a land of their own. These two allusions establish Amram as an insider, a faithful Jew. And his mention of this central facet of Israelite history—the covenant—also serves as contrast with the elders, who never once alluded to Israel's historical relationship with God in their deliberations.²⁶

²⁵ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 177.

²⁶ While the elders are members of the community alluded to by Amram, the fact that they did not engage this fundamental part of Israel's life in their assessment of the situation implies some dereliction on their part. Amram is presented as a more faithful Jew than the elders.



Allusion and Amram's Status in Community

Allusion works cognitively because a reference to a culturally known thing evokes a frame (simplex network). Just as the words “And Toto too?” cause an average 50 year old American to activate a cognitive frame that includes a yellow brick road, flying monkeys, Munchkins, tornados, Kansas, and Auntie Em, the mention of the covenant and Abraham activated a powerful cultural frame that included God’s action on behalf of Israel, the improbable birth of Isaac, covenant promises made and kept, etc. Because this mental framework is associated with figures of authority and tradition, the weight of those figures is likewise invoked. Cognitive frames are strongly metonymic: parts call to mind the whole; the whole suggests the parts.

But as Amram goes on, it’s clear that he is not only referring to the covenant where Israel multiplies and possesses its own land, the covenant described in Genesis 17. His speech also invokes Genesis 15. God’s words occur after Abraham’s sacrifice, which itself followed God’s promise of land and offspring. But in Genesis 15, God never uses the word “covenant.”

Genesis 15 presents a different view of God’s commitments to Abraham than does Genesis 17. Instead of simply assuring Abraham of the

multitude of his offspring, the everlastingness of God's commitment, and the eternal holding of the land, 15:13 tells that Abram's children will be oppressed by foreigners but eventually come out with riches, and receive the land now belonging to others.

This, then, is what Amram brings forward as "the covenant." The guarantee of land and offspring, which is the most prominent feature of the covenant, remains in the background like mental landscape while Amram highlights the fact that God promised more: suffering prior to establishment.

The first two words of this paragraph introduce a counterfactual situation: *someday* (*erit cum*) will always be opposed, in the mind of the reader, to the present. Someday, the covenant—meaning here the prediction of suffering as well as the promise of land—will be fulfilled. But today is not yet someday. And because today is not yet someday, the covenant—the prophecy as well as the gift of territory—is not fulfilled.²⁷ This counterfactual contrasting the present with the future has the same capacity to "float up" as the blends relating to quotation and authority. Not only is the covenant not fulfilled for the community to whom Amram is speaking in the text, the readers of the text are also aware that the covenant has not been fulfilled in their time either. They are also encouraged to see present suffering as part of the broader picture.

Careful readers will notice that one part of the covenant, fruitfulness, has indeed been satisfied: in fact, it is the reason why the Israelites are in a difficult spot at the present. But Israel must wait for freedom and the promised land. The text selectively emphasizes a particular understanding of Israelite history and God's commitments.

4.2.5.1.1 *The Double Cognitive Effect of Allusion*

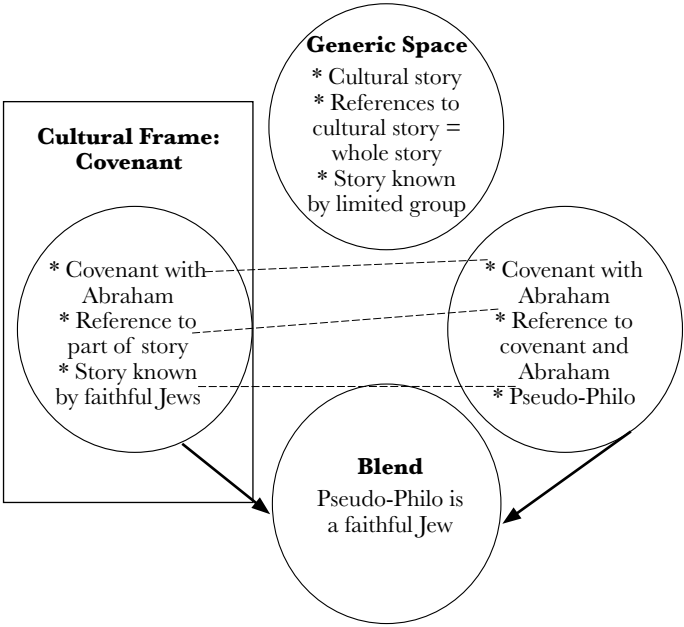
From a cognitive perspective, allusion has a double effect. In the first blend the allusion serves to establish Amram's credentials among the people (while it subtly undermines the elders). But the cognitive blend also "floats up" to the next level of analysis, to affect the status of the implied author. If Amram is accurate and believable, it is because Pseudo-Philo is in the know.

Every time *LAB*'s characters appear to be genuine and appropriate within the tradition, that genuineness and appropriateness accrues to

²⁷ Those who expect the covenant to be fulfilled are making erroneous conclusions.

Pseudo-Philo.²⁸ A mapping of this phenomenon starts with the same generic space and cultural frame; the input on the right merely includes Pseudo-Philo instead of Amram.

This is an important fact for the reading of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. One cannot ignore the author’s portrayal of her characters as reliable and consequently how reliability is credited to the author. If Pseudo-Philo intends to influence her readers, Pseudo-Philo must be established in the reader’s mind as a trustworthy interpreter of the tradition. A reader may ultimately disagree with the text’s construal, but not because the author did not attempt to establish herself as faithful and reliable. However odd some of Pseudo-Philo’s readings may seem to the modern reader, we must note that the author made a considerable attempt to situate this text as a mainstream interpretation of Jewish culture in its time.



The effect of allusion on authorial presentation

²⁸ For more on this phenomenon, see Chapter 5.

4.2.5.2 *Opening Premises: Figures Of Communion: Quotation*

Amram follows the evocation of the covenant and Abraham with a quotation from God. "[God] said, your sons will dwell in a land not their own and will be reduced to slavery and afflicted 400 years." (... *dicens habitando habitabunt natui tui in terra non sua, et in servitutem redigentur et affligentur annis CCCC.*)

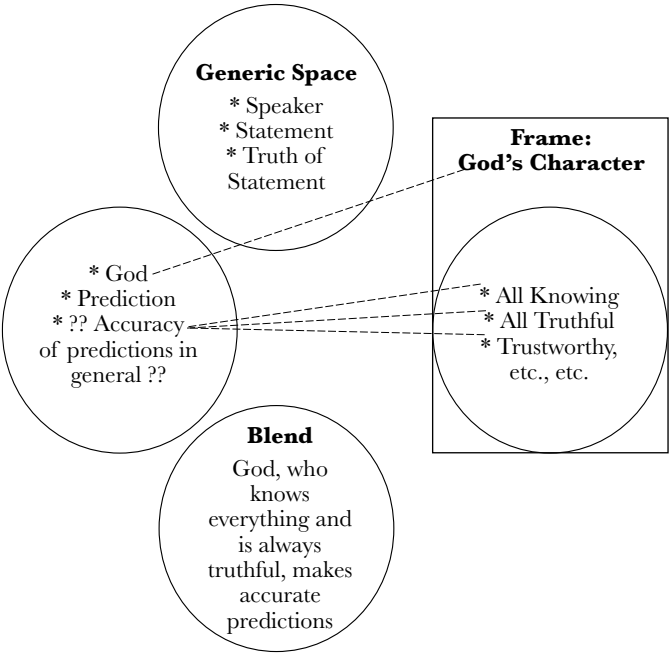
One of the characteristic tropes in Pseudo-Philo is a speaker's habit of quoting from known biblical characters. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca argue that using a quotation is a form of invoking authority and establishing communion with the audience. When a given authority's prestige is accepted by the audience, the quotation confers legitimacy—to the character making the quote as well as to the (implied) author.

The cognitive analysis of the use of quotation is quite similar to the analysis, in the preceding chapter, of prophetic speech. Whereas prophetic speech claims that the prophet was present and actually heard God speak—"Thus says the Lord"—quotation only claims to know the exact words used by God or some other authority. Special knowledge, though not necessarily personal access, is asserted. At times, this assertion makes the person who offers a quotation a "faux eye-witness," as outlined in the chapter above. But eye-witness status is only possible when the information relayed by the speaker is unknown to the audience.

In this situation, the information given by Amram is already known to the audience. They are reminded of their own sacred scriptures: this serves to call up the appropriate mental frame within which to consider the situation. That frame is the structure of the covenant relationship between Israel and God, a rich and complex construction that evokes a long history of promises, fulfillment and special relationship.

When Amram quotes God instructing Abraham, Amram invokes a blend where he assumes a comparable role vis-à-vis the community. If the blend merely told one, however, that a prediction had been made but not yet fulfilled, the usefulness of the blend for cognitive work would be questionable.²⁹

²⁹ The quotation of God is not, as commentators have noted, a verbatim quotation. While individual phrases are exact, the whole sentence as written is not found in the biblical text. But this paraphrasing can serve as allusion; the fact that the text of *LAB* swerves in and out of direct quotation—or, if one likes, between two different versions of the story as it appears in Genesis 15:13 and Exodus 12:40—shows how familiar the speaker is with the sacred story. As in the analysis of allusion, Amram and Pseudo-Philo's reputation as community insiders is reinforced.



Blend: The Accuracy of God's Prediction

But there are additional inputs that influence the outcome of this blend. The first is the input of the quoted person's character. If one quotes from a person whom other people hold in high esteem, that high esteem will accrue, in the blend, to the speaker and the speaker's argument.³⁰ In

³⁰ Unless, of course, there is too great a clash between the speaker and the person quoted, or the quotation seems forced. See, for instance, the Bush administration's use of quotes by Martin Luther King Jr. to argue that King would have opposed affirmative action. In this case, the political distance between Bush and King was too wide to make the statement credible for many who heard or read these remarks.

In other situations when the character of the quoted person is viewed as questionable by the audience, a quotation from that person may not be effective: the truth, wisdom, or usefulness of the quotation or the quoted will be subject to dispute, and hence quotation will have a very different effect on argument. Of course, if the presenter wished to show how awful something was, quotation is still an effective device. One could throw in a quote from a despised person in favor of something which one opposes—for instance, a speaker at the Young Republicans could quote from Hilary Clinton about universal health care in order to undermine the idea. In this case, again, the perceived character of the person quoted affects how a given audience will respond to a quote. The same quote at a meeting of Emily's List donors would garner a very different response.

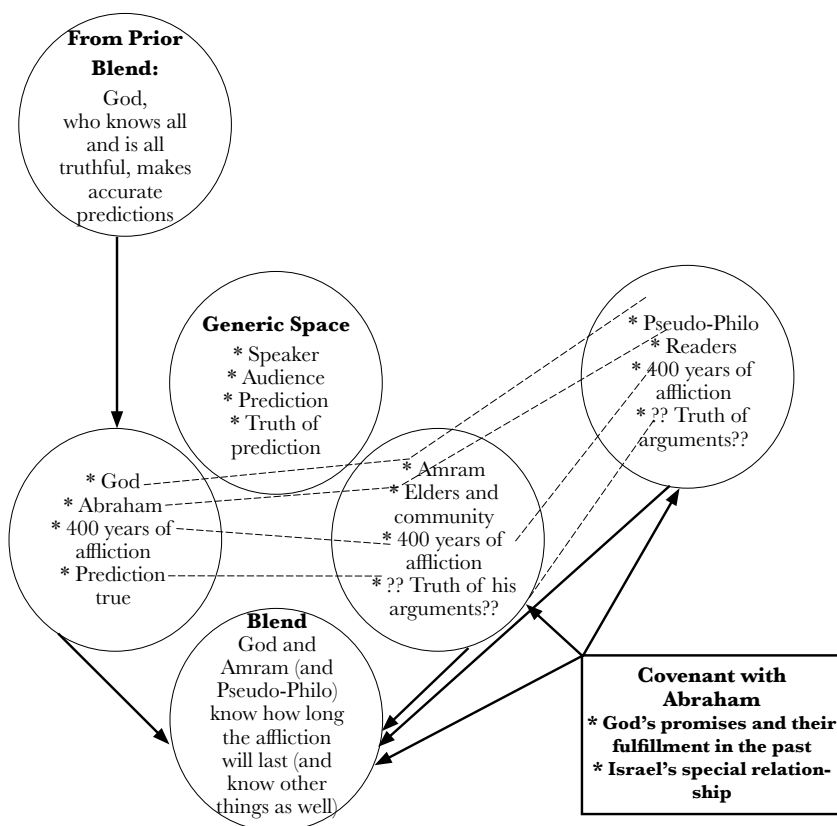
this case, the "person" being quoted is God: for Pseudo-Philo (though possibly not for all of *LAB*'s readers)³¹ God is all knowing, truthful, and wise. Hence, if God says something will happen, it will happen.

The character of a well-known person constitutes a multifaceted and fertile frame (simplex network), which can be employed to evaluate that person's words and behavior. This frame is stable and transportable to any situation in which the person is involved. In this case, the culturally common character of God is blended with God's statement and the unspoken question of whether God's predictions are in general true. The all-knowing and trustworthy character of God answers the unspoken question and determines the outcome of the blend.

In the next mapping of blends, God as speaker in Pseudo-Philo is compressed with God who makes accurate prediction: thus, the prediction found in Pseudo-Philo is considered truthful. This "blended God" is also compressed with Amram (and Pseudo-Philo) through the vital relations role of speaker; hence the accrual of authority to both Amram and Pseudo-Philo through quotation. The audiences are also compressed—Abraham-elders (and reader)—through their role as recipients of the message, and finally the prediction in each input is compressed with the other predictions across time through the vital relation of identity.

In the analysis of allusion, we noted that there is a double activation—the credibility spread "upward" from the original blend affecting Amram to the blend affecting Pseudo-Philo. In the analysis of quotation, we observe a triple activation of the imbedded quote. First the quote in the base space—that is, the space where God makes a prediction—is blended with the frame of God's character to show that the prediction must be accurate. The cognitive blend "God" whom Amram quotes is given credibility. Then the authority of this blended "God" accrues to the character citing the quote (i.e., Amram). Finally, provided that both the quoted and the one quoting present no serious cognitive dissonance for the reader, their authority accrues to the implied author.

³¹ Since at many points Pseudo-Philo seems to be arguing that God's actions are appropriate, we may assume that some of his audience did not always feel the same.



Triple Cognitive Activation of Quotation

This mapping also includes the frame of covenant and the biblical story. Again, this frame is culturally established, familiar, and transportable to any situation in which the covenant is invoked. The elders and the community are presumed to know their own history and from whence the quotation came. They are expected to recognize the reference to the covenant as well as the promise to Abraham. In this particular illustration, because Pseudo-Philo's readers also know that the prediction came true, their knowledge of the prediction's reliability will also be added to the mental space and affect the judgment of God's/Amram's/Pseudo-Philo's trustworthiness.³²

³² The covenant/biblical story frame serves not only to provide specific input to the mental space, but also as another allusion, to establish Amram and Pseudo-Philo as insiders.

4.2.6 *Opening Premises: Status and Presentation of Elements:
"Facts", or Reframing*

The presentation of certain data in an argument can be fudged: a speaker usually attempts to assign the highest possible status to his or her data in order to increase its importance and command agreement. "Facts, truths, and presumptions are assumed to command the agreement of the universal audience, whereas values, hierarchies, and loci only command the agreement of particular audiences."³³

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca argue that one can transform "value judgments, and even purely subjective feelings . . . into judgments of fact through certain tricks of presentation."³⁴ One such trick involves using the terminology of facts to describe value judgments. In this way, the thing described will seem beyond judgment; value is ascribed without having to be asserted. Likewise, attributing a value judgment to a personage of sufficient status can reshape a judgment as fact. This rhetorical move corresponds to the cognitive act of reframing—presenting the same material blended with a new set of inputs.

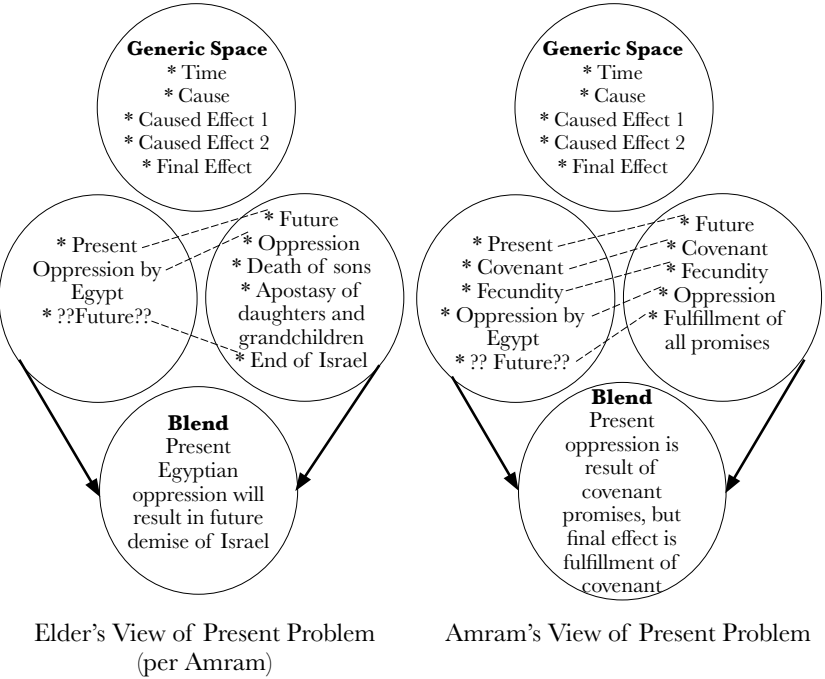
Pseudo-Philo uses this device regularly. In the text cited above, Amram cites a prophecy by God to challenge the elders. Naming the present affliction as something predicted by God transforms the situation. It is not the beginning of the end of the people (this is Amram's interpretation of the elders' argument, not necessarily their own), but rather a necessary step in the fulfillment of the covenant. Rather than considering the present situation within a mental frame where Egypt's oppression becomes causal for death, idolatry, and possible extinction, Amram invokes a mental space where the present pain is as much a part of God's promise as Israel's fecundity.

The two blends contrasting the elders' view (as Amram defines it) and Amram's assessment of the situation use the same input—the present oppression by Egypt—and they utilize the same generic space. What differs is the second input. The elders' input focuses on their fears for the future; Amram instead begins with the covenant and God's promises. In the elders' blend, as Amram has defined it, the Egyptian oppression is causal for later evils. In Amram's blend, the Egyptian oppression is a caused effect of God's covenant promises. While in Amram's eyes the situation is still difficult, it is not the beginning of the end for Israel but is merely one of several predicted outcomes resulting from the covenant.

³³ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 179.

³⁴ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 180.

The assessment that the current situation is not dire but part of God’s plan is a value judgment on Amram’s part, which opposes the value judgments made by the elders. It is by ascribing his opinion to God, and presenting it as part of the great divine plan, that Amram manages to give his opinion the status of truth.



4.3 TECHNIQUES OF ARGUMENTATION

Having covered what Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca consider the starting point of argumentation—the selection and presentation of the premises—one now arrives at the techniques of argumentation. However, as the authors acknowledge, there is a great deal of overlap between these two sections, since selection and presentation are already forms of argumentation.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca divide the techniques of argumentation into two large categories: processes of association and dissociation. Rhetorically, association brings independent elements together in such a way that we perceive a similarity between them; dissociation takes elements which we conceive to make a whole and breaks them into

disparate parts. Within the purview of association techniques, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca list quasi-logical arguments, arguments which attempt to establish the structure of reality, and analogy, which includes metaphor. Dissociative arguments, in their view, deal with the breaking of links, the difference between appearance and reality, and dissociative statements.

All arguments, regardless of rhetorical classification, involve the construction of blends. A given blend may result in an association, where an input, combined with some culturally licensed frame(s) or accepted metaphor(s), results in a final mental space which is in some way consistent with that frame or metaphor. In other words, a category is evoked, and the input in question is shown to be a member of the category. A dissociative argument will proceed in the same way, by blending the input with a culturally licensed frame or accepted metaphor, but the resulting mental space will be, in some manner, cognitively inconsistent. The input will be shown NOT to be a member of a given category. This kind of argument is actually counterfactual: showing how a particular datum does not fit a category ordinarily involves showing that some other datum does fit the category in question, or that the original datum fits a different category. The identification of consistency and inconsistency is crucial in reasoning: one can argue that X is proved because Y results in an inconsistent concept, a blend which cannot be accepted.

Because both associative and dissociative arguments use similar blending techniques, the category label is misleading whether one uses a strictly rhetorical approach or a cognitive method. For instance, while Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca identify a quasi-logical argument that displays the inconsistency of a system as associative, in reality such an argument functions by producing both consistent and inconsistent blends. Likewise, a dissociative argument always contains an associative blend: That blend is merely not the one that the person arguing wishes to emphasize.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca acknowledge that association and dissociation always occur in tandem, but that only one can be accentuated at a given time. They claim "...the same form which unites various elements into a well-organized whole dissociates them from the neutral background from which it separates them."³⁵

Cognitive linguistic analysis would not concur in the assumption that there is such a thing as a neutral background in argumentation or in

³⁵ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 190.

cognition. Cognition always occurs within a context. There is only the presentation of datum or elements in the blend which the one arguing chooses. If I introduce the frame of covenant and emphasize the promised land, my opponent can choose a different element of that cognitive frame such as the promise of fruitfulness. But my choice is not neutral, anymore than hers is. It only appears to be neutral because my argument was presented first, or because the person reading shares my ideology.

The assumption that backgrounds are neutral can cause one to ignore their inherently argumentative nature, and thereby miss the grounding of an argument. Cognitive analysis can identify the environment in which the initial argument is grounded as well as that of the subsequent argument. Some recent rhetorical studies have attempted this kind of analysis; but utilizing a cognitive perspective allows one to avoid the charge of “reading in” to the text.

4.3.1 *Techniques: Whole/Part Inclusion and Division*

Rhetorical analysis approaches the question of part/whole relationships by noting that when an entity is compared as a whole with one of its parts, the argument “ascribes no special quality either to the parts or to the whole.”³⁶ Alternatively, arguments of division are judged to rely upon identifying special qualities which serve to differentiate the part and the whole.

A cognitive perspective would disagree—any argument that claims part/whole inclusion does indeed ascribe special qualities to the part as well as the whole. It is just that the qualities being ascribed are rendered invisible because the part and whole have a metonymic relationship. That relationship may be the result of a cultural frame or be evoked by the grammatical usage.

In a cultural frame, part and whole “co-occur” mentally. If you think of an entire orange, the segment that you hope to have in your hand is part of that whole; if you think of the segment in your hand, it had to have come from a whole. There is a metonymic relationship between part and whole, and the mention of one will suggest the other.

Sometimes an argument will claim a relationship that is not the result of a pre-existing mental schema but is rather the result of applying a “part-whole” schema to a given situation. Certain linguistic phrases or grammar will evoke such schema. If I say, *This is one of my paintings*, the phrase “one of my paintings” (where a singular noun is modified by

³⁶ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 231.

a plural noun phrase) activates the cultural understanding of a single entity among multiple entities all of which are related in some way.³⁷ In the same manner, if I say, *That price is in my range*, "that price" is singular but "range" carries a plural meaning.

According to B. Howe, there is an additional way that this second example, *That price is in my range*, works cognitively.³⁸ The phrase "in" evokes an image, or container, schema. When one uses "in", whether literally or metaphorically, the cognitive concept of a "bounded region in space" with an inside and an outside is activated.³⁹ If the bounded region in space comprises a "whole" in some way, then things "inside" it are parts: in this case, the price you've quoted me is part of the whole range of prices I think I can afford.

In all of these examples, the special quality is so much a part of cultural understanding—due to grammar or cultural frame—that one does not notice it. But not noticing is quite different from claiming that something does not exist.

In a whole/part division, things which have been previously established as categorically related are redefined by applying different inputs. These new inputs result in cognitive blends that yield a blend no longer belonging to the previous category. If I said, *I'd like a piece of fruit*, but had previously defined a "piece of fruit" as an intact ripened ovary of a seed-bearing plant, together with accessory parts,⁴⁰ then the orange segment spoken of earlier no longer belongs to the same category as the uncut orange. The whole orange now has more in common with a pear, a tomato, or an avocado than it does with the section. The mention of the orange, in this case, no longer necessarily implies the orange slices.

The quality which one uses to argue part/whole inclusion, or whole/part division, need not be the most important quality of an entity, or even the most obvious quality; instead, it is just one of a multitude of possibilities. For instance, if I took you to a lot full of previously owned cars and said, *This 1967 Volkswagen is used, just like all the other cars here*, the Volkswagen would be a part of the whole. If, however, I said, *This*

³⁷ So too, for instance, the phrase *I'd like **that** pair of **shoes***. It seems apparent that common grammatical structures reflect—and evoke—mental structure that carries a wealth of unconscious information about relationships between entities.

³⁸ It is most likely that something similar to Howe's container schema is also at work in phrases such as, *That's one of my paintings*, where the grammar prompts for an image that contains the multiple objects including the one singled out for attention.

³⁹ Bonnie Howe, *Because You Bear This Name: Conceptual Metaphor and the Moral Meaning of I Peter*. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2006) 237.

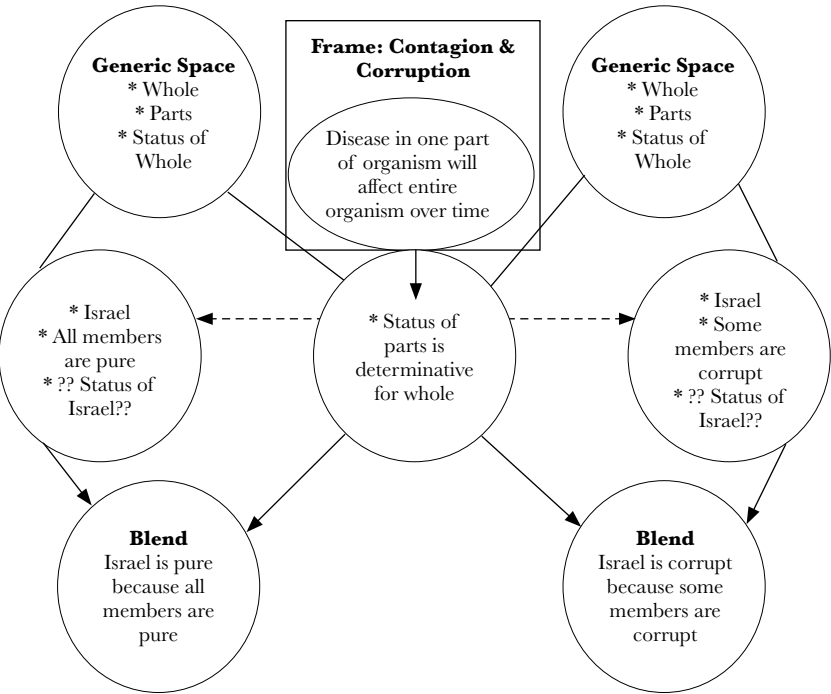
⁴⁰ *American Heritage Dictionary, Second College Edition* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982) 537.

Volkswagen is the only pink car here, you would see it as different from the others. But neither “used” nor “pink” is necessarily the most obvious way to portray a particular car: they are just different ways used to clump something in as part of a whole or separate it out as different.

Such qualities that separate part and whole are not necessarily inherent in the data under examination prior to the construction of the cognitive blend. The quality comes into existence because one applies a particular mental input during the course of the blend. The choice of a mental input, however, is never neutral.

4.3.1.1 *Israel as an Example of Whole/Part Inclusion and Part/Whole Division*

In Chapter 25 of Pseudo-Philo, Israel is at first portrayed as a whole, and then as divisible into parts, and finally as a whole again. As a whole, the community is contaminated by the apostasy of some members. When divided, corrupt members can be identified and excised in order that Israel can become again whole and clean. The actions taken by the community are responses to these specific cognitive frames.



Part/Whole Inclusion

In verse 1, the people ask God whether they should go to war, and God replies, "[I]f you go up with a pure heart, fight; but if your heart is defiled, do not go up." (*Si corde puro ascenditis pugnate, si autem contaminatum est cor vestrum non ascendatis.*) "You" is plural, and "heart" is singular. The community, composed of multiple parts, has but a single heart which can be either pure or impure. Cleanliness and uncleanness are not just personal and private issues; the whole community is subject to group purity or group contamination.

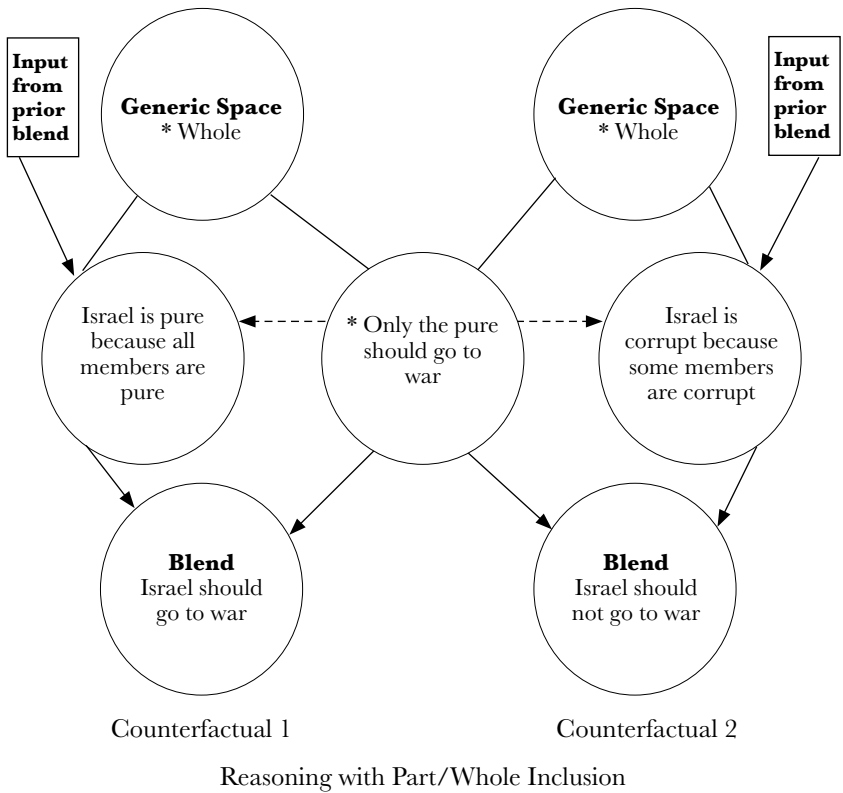
In this speech, impurity is viewed as contagious while purity is not. Israel is metaphorically viewed as a complex inter-related physical object like a body or a plant, where corruption in any part leads to corruption of the whole. The cognitive frame of a whole containing some corrupt parts which, over time, will sicken the entire body or plant would have been well known to Pseudo-Philo's audience, who had intimate and daily knowledge of plants, animals, and bodies.⁴¹

In this particular mental construction, time is collapsed; the fact that it would take time for an infection within an entity to spread to the entire organism is ignored. Instead, the presence of infection/impurity in one part equates to contamination of the complete whole.

Once one determines what the community status is, then one can determine whether the community should go to war. The blends present a set of counterfactuals. Divine approval for war is contingent on appropriate community status.

Immediately following God's statement, the people ask what they can do to determine their status, i.e., the purity of their hearts. *How will we know if the heart of all the people is the same? (Quomodo sciemus si omne cor populi equale sit?)* The all-or-nothing proposition of the first blend means that the presence of a single sinner will occasion the loss of God's favor for the entire community. Rather than risk that loss, they seek a division: "heart" is still singular but it is now a heart capable of being either the same or different—from some other heart. God suggests casting lots so the people will be divided according to "...whose heart is pure and whose is defiled." (...*cuius cor purum est and cuius contaminatum sit.*) Now the whole is divisible into parts; by throwing lots to assess personal defilement, one can separate those members who are

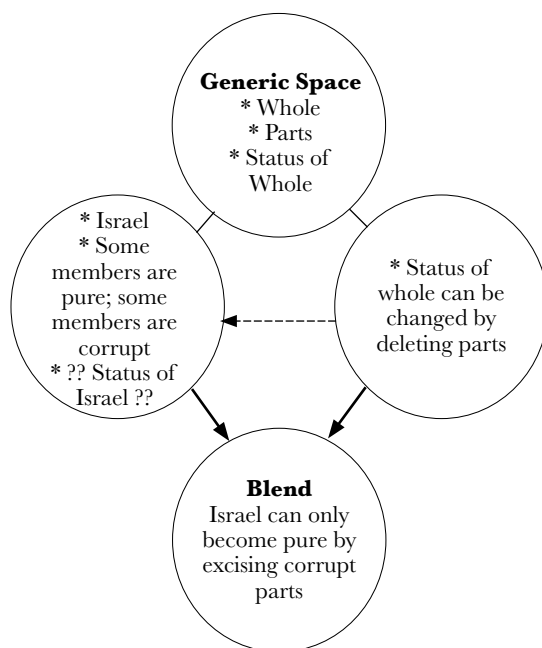
⁴¹ An alternative way of portraying this blend would be to use a metaphoric input, such as a plant with a diseased branch, or a human with an infected limb. The input used in the blend shown here is merely the abstract structure of such a metaphor. As such, it constitutes a common cultural frame for living organisms.



corrupt from those that are not. The grammatical structure shows not one entity but multiple entities, with different characteristics.

Since purity was an all-or-nothing proposition in the original blend proposed by God, this second statement alters that conception by undoing the compression of time implied in the earlier blend. The presence of corruption in a part does not necessarily foretell corruption in all parts, provided that the contaminated parts are promptly removed. The nature of the whole can be changed by altering its parts. Again, in a concept that would have been familiar to ancient peoples, one could save an organism with a diseased limb by removing the diseased portion before corruption spread. Metaphorically, the only chance that Israel has to be pure of heart is to excise every last tainted member.

Both the part/whole inclusion argument and the whole/part division argument are necessary to make the case that some people in Israel should die for their sins. When the community possesses a single heart, as in the first blend, one person's ruination is contagious to the entire community. But the second blend holds out the possibility that



Division of Whole into Parts

contamination of the community can be stopped by identifying and removing tainted members. The sinners do not permanently affect Israel; their elimination restores the community to a pure state, because all members are now pure.

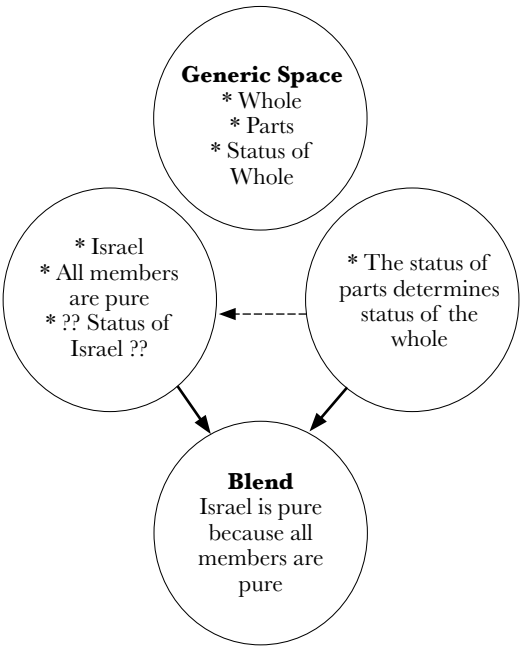
In the fourth and final blend, Kenaz—who has been selected as the leader to direct the process of casting lots—speaks to the entire community about what will happen when the contaminated members are identified. He says,

... audivimus de ore Domini quoniam cor vestrum contaminatum est, et precepit nobis Dominus ut mittamus sortem in tribus vestras, ut sciamus cuius cor recessit a Domino Deo nostro ut non adducatur⁴² in populum indignatio iracundie.

... [W]e have heard from the mouth of the Lord that your heart is defiled, and the Lord has ordered us to cast lots by your tribes in order that we may know whose heart has turned away from the Lord our God so that the fury of his wrath not be brought upon the people.

Kenaz begins by referring to the whole, with a single heart; then points to individuals whose hearts differ from the (single) heart of the people.

⁴² Reading, with Jacobson, from the Π text.



Part/Whole Inclusion

As in the first blend, the presence of corruption can render the whole rotten. But the possibility of excising the tainted parts holds out the hope that the whole can again be whole, and pure.

This is one example of how an argument proceeds when dealing with part/whole issues. The whole is defined in a particular way; then the parts are re-defined in order to change the nature of the whole; finally, the whole is re-defined. The fact that in this case the input gave determinative status to the impure parts of the whole over other parts is, obviously, not a universal value in whole/part arguments.⁴³ It just shows that a given part/whole or whole/part question will use cognitive constructs that are triggered by grammar and that incorporate cultural knowledge of different part/whole structures.

⁴³ We could just as easily have analyzed the biblical Abraham's argument with God over Sodom and Gomorrah, where the status of a "pure" minority would have saved the impure majority.

4.3.2 *Techniques: Quasi-logical Arguments*

4.3.2.1 *Techniques: Quasi-Logical Arguments: Displaying Inconsistency*

When one displays the inconsistency of a system, the rhetorical intent is to render the system in question useless for the purposes of argumentation. Such an incompatibility constitutes an argument about nature of reality, not a part of reality.

From a cognitive perspective, displaying the inconsistency of a system involves using your opponent's original data in concert with a new input in order to show that your opponent's cognitive blend cannot be derived from the situation at hand. It is less a question about what constitutes reality than about what level of reality—what input—is appropriate to this argument.

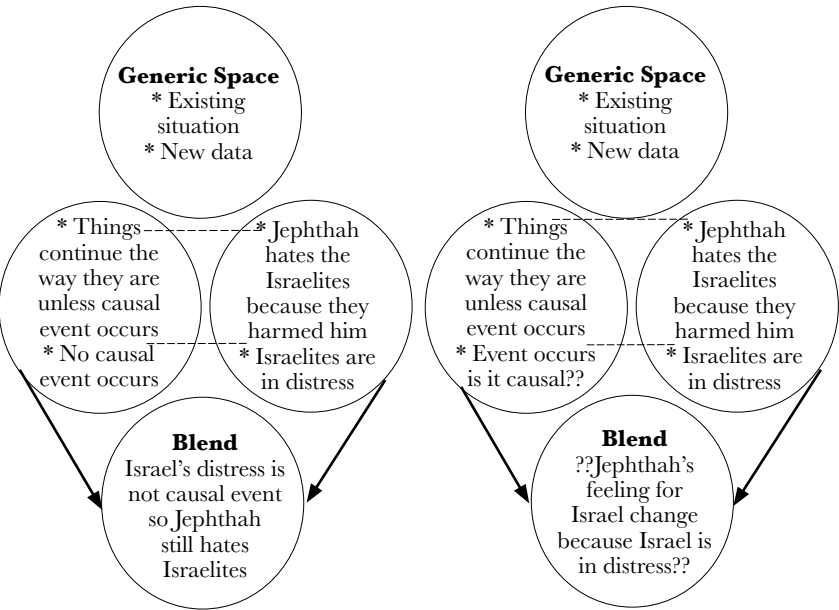
A fine illustration of this occurs in *LAB* 39:4, where Israel's elders and Jephthah engage in a rhetorical battle, or war of cognitive blends. In each exchange, the speaker uses very selective projections from larger cultural frames; only certain aspects of God, Jephthah, mortals, and doves are mapped by each side. The results, of course, are different analogies and different conclusions; i.e., different inputs and resultant blends. No one is arguing about whether God is different from mortals; only about which of those differences are pertinent to the discussion.

The people of Israel attempt to persuade Jephthah to return and lead them into battle against their oppressors. The argument begins when Jephthah points out that he has been wronged by his brothers in the past, and is not able forget the wrong that has been done him. As he says, "Does love so return after hatred, or does time conquer all things, for you drove me out of my land and out of the house of my father but⁴⁴ now you have come to me when you are in distress?" (*Sic post odium dilectio revertitur, aut tempus omnia vincit, quoniam eiecistis me de terra mea et de domo patris mei, et nunc venistis ad me quando pressura facta est vobis?*)

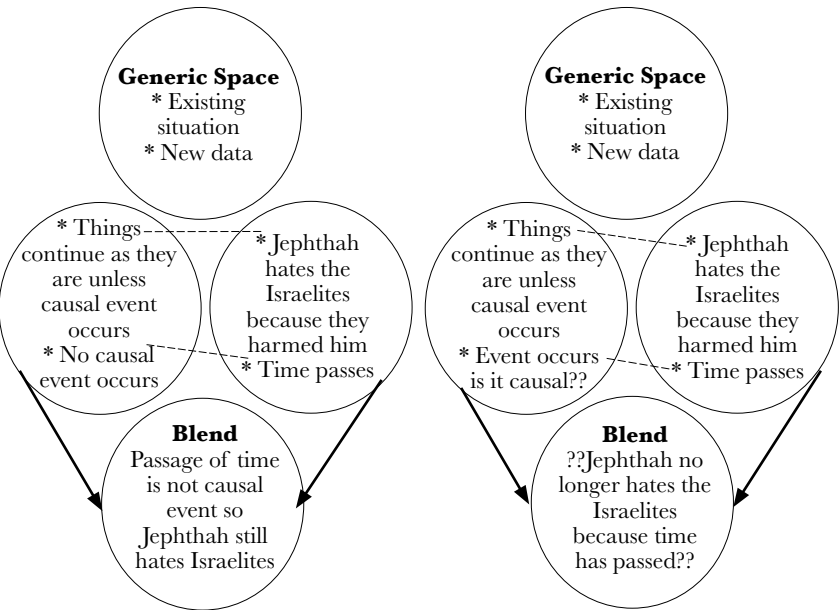
The blends evoked by Jephthah's statement are counterfactuals, but he indicates what he considers the right answer by the way he poses the question.⁴⁵ In both cases, Jephthah's blend includes the cultural truth that things don't change in and of themselves: some causal factor

⁴⁴ The Hebrew here would have had *waw*, which can be translated as either the connective "and" or the adversative "but". The adversative makes more sense here.

⁴⁵ As in the case of the imperative examined earlier in this chapter, the grammatical composition of Jephthah's statements are themselves inputs into the blend being considered. The manner in which the question is framed tells us what it is that we are supposed to conclude.



Jephthah's first counterfactual argument



Jephthah's second counterfactual argument

has to be introduced, and it has to be sufficient to the situation. In the situation described, he implies that the distress of the Israelites is not sufficient to change his own hatred and hurt; he implies that the normal response to his enemies' distress would not be compassion but rejoicing. His point is proved because his opponent's point—at least as he has constructed it—cannot be accepted.

In the second counterfactual, Jephthah rejects the idea that the passage of time is a sufficient cause for forgiving your enemy.

Both of these counterfactuals are constructed so that the left-hand mapping shows Jephthah's contention, and the right-hand mapping reflects his portrayal of his opponent's unsatisfactory argument.

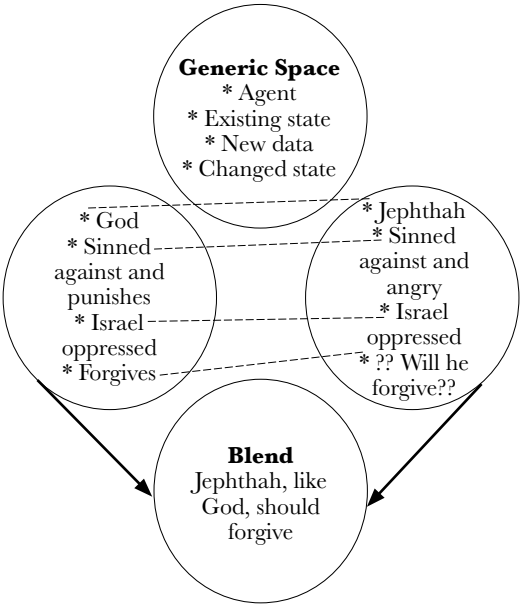
The people respond to Jephthah's argument by challenging his conclusions. When Jephthah argues that his feelings are impervious to change because nothing substantial enough to cause that change has occurred, the people counter by citing an example where God changes, specifically because the people are in distress. They offer a blend where Jephthah is compared to God. God, who has been greatly wronged by the same people, responds first with punishment, but then forgives.

Si Deus patrum nostrorum, cum peccavisset ei et tradidisset nos in conspectum inimicorum nostrorum et premeremur ab his, inmemor fuit peccatorum nostrorum et liberavit nos, quid tu vis, homo mortalis, iniquitates que acciderunt nobis memorari in tempore pressurae nostrae?

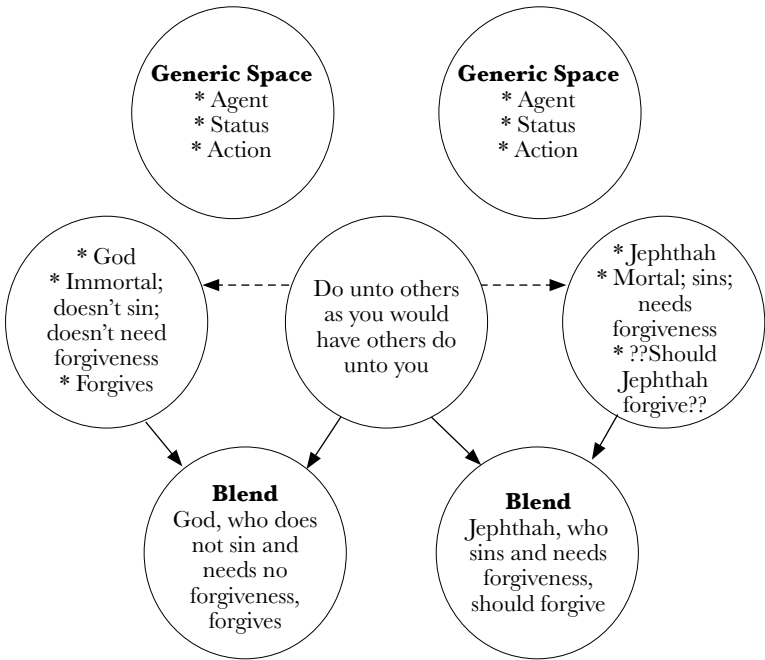
If the God of our fathers, though we had sinned against him and he had delivered us up before our enemies and we were oppressed by them, was not mindful of our sins but freed us, why do you, a mortal man, want to recall our iniquities in the time of our distress?

The cognitive work begins when the people evoke the cultural frame of God, and highlight three facts: God has been sinned against multiple times, God's initial response is punishment, and God changes and forgives. The sight of the people's distress is sufficient, for God, to engender forgiveness. If the people's pain is sufficient to change the immortal God, then should it not be sufficient to change a mere mortal like Jephthah?

The people who make the argument are aware that Jephthah is different from God, and that one could argue that God is capable of forgiving where a human is not. So they attempt to fortify their contention by introducing (just a hint of) another mental blend concerning the nature of divinity and mortality. In this human/divine frame Jephthah is designated mortal and hence inherently sinful; God the immortal is sinless. This cultural knowledge is combined with another piece of



Blend: The People’s comparison of Jephthah to God



The People’s Counterfactual: The nature of divinity versus mortality

cultural knowledge, the Golden Rule. This moral rule is employed as an input with both God and Jephthah. Under this scenario, God does not "need" forgiveness and therefore has no need to forgive. Jephthah's situation is exactly the opposite.

The people's argument has introduced the concept that being human means being in need of forgiveness. Jephthah reframes the argument by accepting the premise that he is mortal, but then redefines what that means.⁴⁶ Rather than portraying a mortal as a being in need of forgiveness, Jephthah argues that to be mortal is to have limited time and space. In Jephthah's re-presentation, God forgives because God has the time and place for self-restraint, not because of graciousness. Jephthah's humanity and attendant lack of resources becomes the excuse for his unforgiving attitude, rather than a reason for pardon.

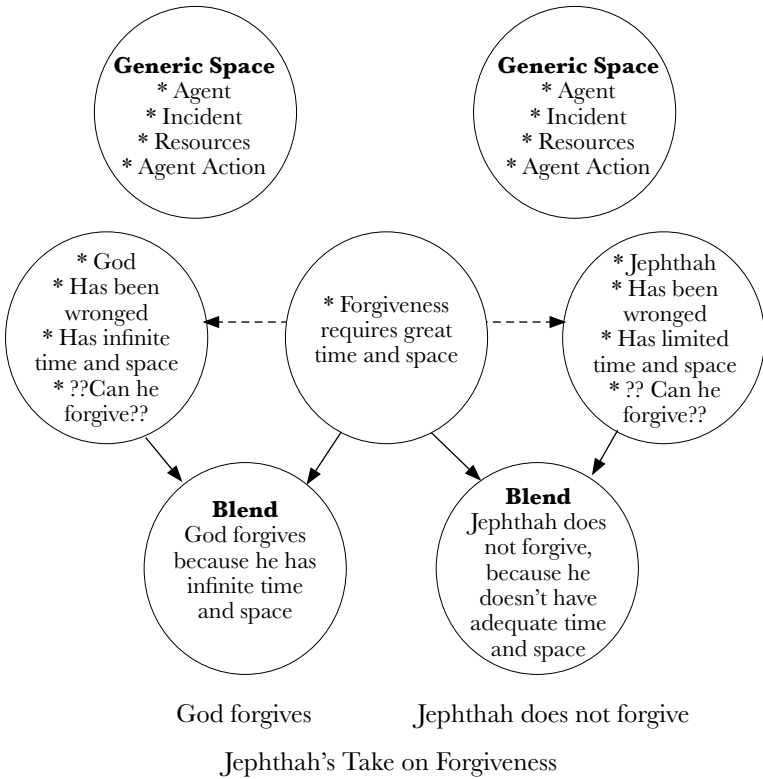
Et dixit Jeptan: Deus potest peccatorum nostrorum memor non esse, qui habet tempus et locum ubi requiescat a longanimitate sua tamquam Deus; ego autem, mortalis et de terra factus in quam reversurus sum, ubi proiciam iram meam et iniuriam qua nocuistis me?

Jephthah said, "God can be unmindful of our sins, for he has the time and place in which he as God may restrain himself as a result of his long-suffering; but I, a mortal man and made from the dust to which I will return, where shall I cast off my wrath and the injury that you have done me?"

The difference between God and Jephthah's ability to forgive is not stiffness of character or unwillingness to do the right thing on Jephthah's part, as the people's earlier blend implied. In their argument, his nature (as a sinning mortal) dictates that he has a need to forgive. But in Jephthah's argument, his nature (as a limited mortal) is exactly the reason why he is incapable of forgiving. It's not a choice; it is instead the form of reality.

The attempt to alter the grounds of the discussion continues. The people instruct Jephthah to compare himself to a dove rather than to God. The dove, like Jephthah, experiences mortality. But in this case, the time and space limits of mortality that Jephthah cited as the reason for not forgiving are shown to be no barrier to forgiveness—or, at least, no barrier to forgetting a wrong done to one.

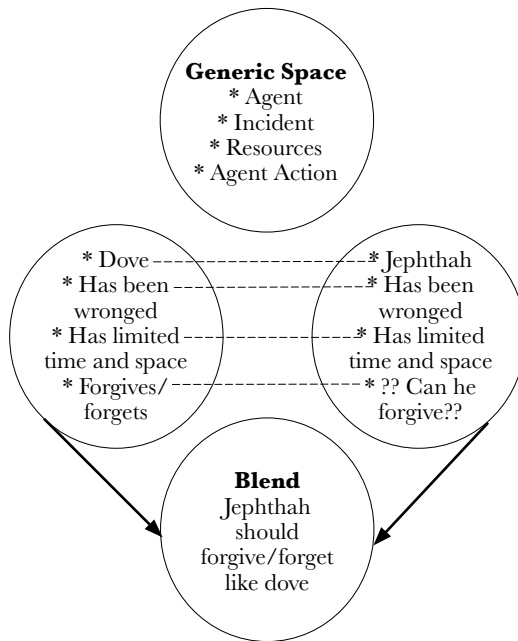
⁴⁶ Jephthah also alludes to the biblical story about humanity's creation from dust, establishing himself as an insider and hence someone who has the authority to argue back.



Et dixit ad eum populus: Edoceat te columba cui assimilatus est Israel quia, cum auferuntur ab ea filii eius, tamen de loco non recedit suo, et respuens iniuriam suam obliviscet velut in profundo abyssi.

The people said to him, “Let the dove to which Israel has been compared instruct you, because when her young are taken from her, still she does not depart from her place, but she puts away the injury done her and forgets it as if it were in the depths of the deep.”

The first arguments in this series dealt with the cultural understanding that change does not occur without a cause; the people and Jephthah differ on whether the distress of one’s enemy is a sufficient cause for forgiveness. Then a side issue, mortality, is taken up as the focal point for the rest of the debate. Mortality is variously seen as a reason for forgiveness (because mortality implies sinning, and sinning implies the need for forgiveness), or the reason forgiveness is impossible (because life is too limited to allow for forgiveness). Finally, another mortal being—even more limited than a human—is shown as capable of forgiveness.



Jephthah compared to dove

In each case, the example redefines the system of thinking laid out by the previous example by selecting different facets to emphasize, i.e., different inputs to the blend. None of these cases are presented against a “neutral” background—the backgrounds only appear neutral because of the presentation. Throughout the argument, Jephthah’s situation is figured as belonging first to one category—a whole—and then reconfigured as not belonging to that category but to another instead. Each new classification uses part/whole reasoning to separate from the other’s argument, and whole/part reasoning to underpin one’s own argument.

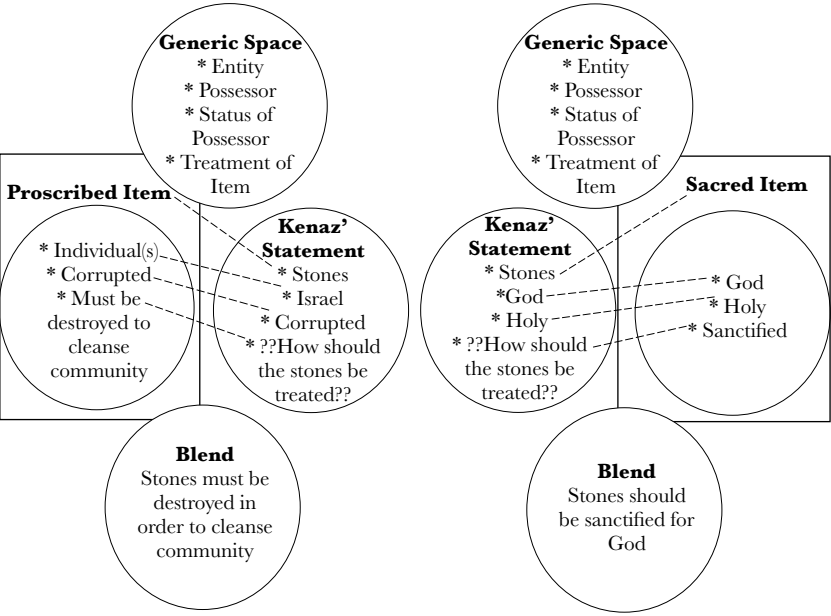
4.3.2.2 *Techniques: Quasi-logical Arguments: The Rule of Justice*

Another form of quasi-logical argument is argument by rule of justice. In a case of rule of justice, one argues that identical treatment must be accorded in situations of the same kind. From a cognitive perspective, this means that, for each of the situations under consideration, one of the inputs to the blend must stay constant. In other words, the situations are portrayed as members of a category.

LAB 26 begins with a discussion between God and Kenaz about the disposition of the precious stones of the Amorites. This discussion shows God responding to Kenaz by using a quasi-logical argument based on a rule of justice.

In verse two Kenaz inquires, “Shall we burn those precious stones in the fire or sanctify them to you, for among us there are none like these?” (*Numquid et lapides hos preciosos comburemus igni, aut sanctificamus eos tibi, quoniam non sunt in nobis similes his?*) God responds, “If God takes anything for his own sake from what was proscribed, what will man do?” (*Si Deus aliquid accipit in nomine suo de anathemate, quid faciet homo?*)

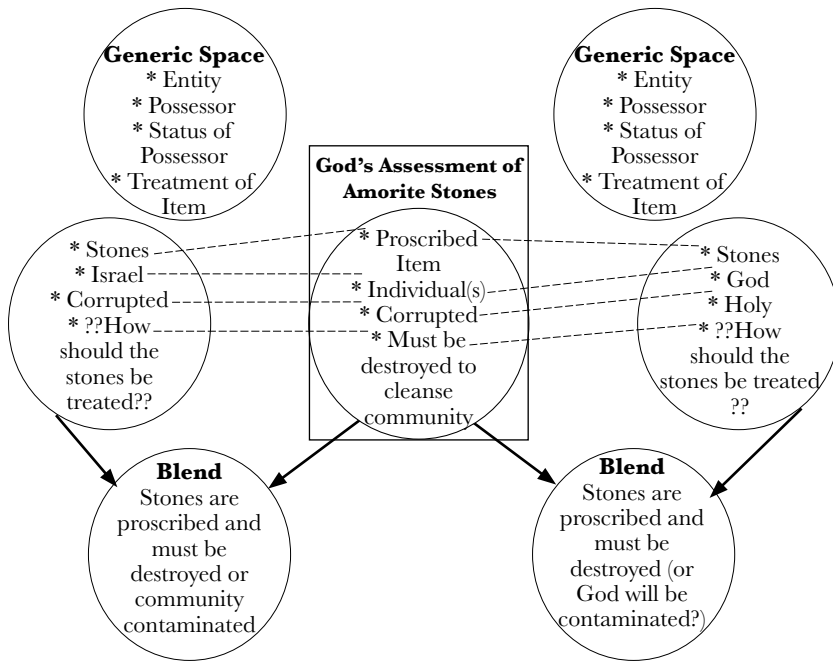
Kenaz poses a counterfactual question to God. His statement assumes that the gems are powerful and that their possession is dangerous. But this danger could be due to either proscription or sacredness. Clearly, the Israelites who possessed them had to die. But Kenaz is questioning whether they had to die because they possessed something inherently evil, or because they kept for themselves something powerful that should have been dedicated to God. Kenaz wonders whether the stones can be sanctified for divine possession.



Kenaz's argument:

Amorite stones possessed by Israelites

Amorite stones possessed by God



God's argument:

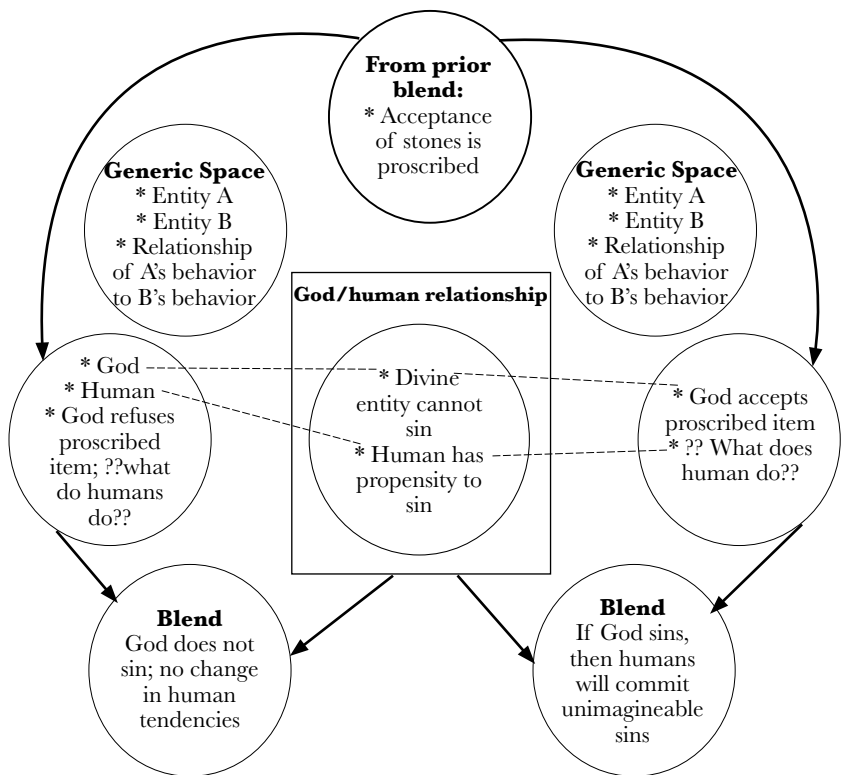
Amorite stones possessed by Israelites

Amorite stones possessed by God

In Kenaz's eyes, the ethical nature of the stones is mutable. Cognitively, although the stones are involved in both transactions, there are no constant inputs in the two blends used by Kenaz.

God's answer to Kenaz is based on God's judgment that the Amorite religious items are problematic no matter who possesses them; that is, they represent a constant input to the blend. If the items were so dangerous that the people who came into contact with them had to be destroyed in order to prevent contamination of the entire community, then their corrupting influence is immutable. They cannot be sanctified to God: their defining characteristic is proscription, not rareness. God's response uses the "rule of justice" by applying the same treatment—or, in cognitive linguistic parlance, the same input—to both situations, rather than using different rules for humans and God.

Having established that the sacred stones are permanently unclean and proscribed, God's argument also introduces an ordered relationship between God and humans. Pseudo-Philo uses a mental space, common cultural knowledge, which emphasizes the difference between



The Implications of God Sinning

human sinfulness and God's perfection.⁴⁷ Once the human propensity to sin is contrasted with God's inability to sin, then the reader is asked to imagine a case in which God actually sins. The linguistic analysis shows a counterfactual, where identical input (human sinfulness, God's perfection) is used in both mental blends. One is invited to imagine the unimaginable spectacle of God sinning.

One could also view this argument, rhetorically, as using the argument of probabilities. However, in either case, the linguistic mapping would be identical.

⁴⁷ This is the same cultural understanding found immediately prior to this section in the "inconsistency" analysis of Jephthah's discussion with the people.

4.3.3 *Techniques: Argument by Authority*

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca understand an argument from authority as a method of using the "opinions of a person or group of persons as a means of proof in support of a thesis."⁴⁸ As they note, argument from authority has been vigorously attacked because of its use to censor views contrary to a particular belief system. Because of this historical practice, many theoreticians consider argument from authority irrational.

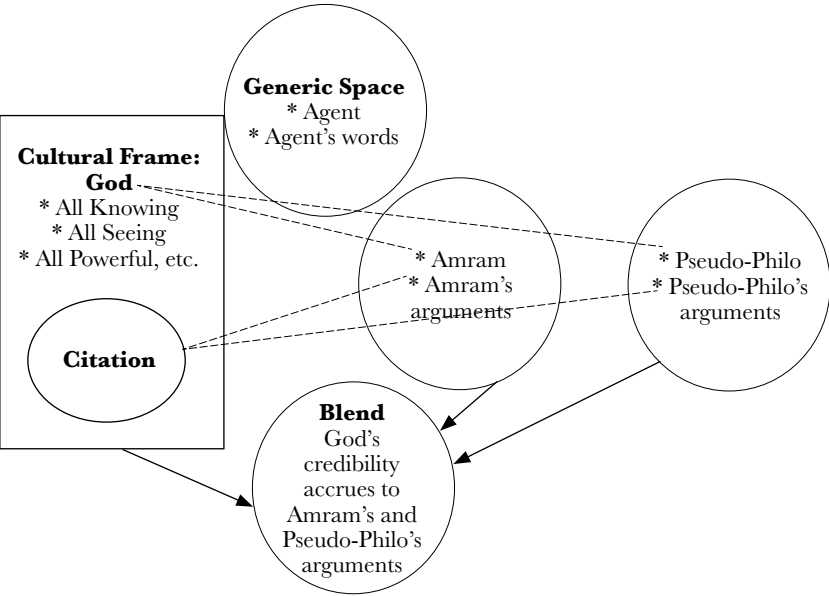
But for Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, arguments from authority are important regardless of the use to which they have been put in the past. As they note, often the contention advanced by critics is not so much about *whether* to allow an argument from authority, but rather about *which* authority should be used. Since when one is arguing from authority, the person cited must have some kind of positive status in the minds of those hearing the argument, the real problem that critics of this technique have is the discrepancy between authorities acceptable to the speaker/author and those acceptable to the listener/reader.

Cognitively, arguments from authority in a text such as Pseudo-Philo use a two-step mental blend.⁴⁹ The argument may, just by virtue of using the name of or a recognizable reference to an authority, introduce a cultural frame recognizable to the reader in which the person mentioned functions as a powerful and persuasive being—e.g., the name "God" or "Moses." Or one could introduce a lesser-known personality by using an allusion which establishes that person as a member of a group considered powerful in the readers' eyes, in which case the group's status accrues to the cited authority—e.g., "the prophet Kenaz." An allusion can also portray the authority as a member of the group to which the reader belongs, with similar world-view, etc.—"our fathers in Egypt." In any case, credibility of the authority is an input to a cognitive blend, and in the blend, the character in the text that makes the citation is credited with that authority's standing.

The second level of cognitive blend establishes an analogical relationship between the character and the author, which lends the power of the authority quoted by the character to the author and his/her remarks. This blend has the same effect as the blends on quotation and authority examined earlier.

⁴⁸ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 305.

⁴⁹ Minimally. Of course, the blends we analyze are terrifically simplified from what actually happens in the brain.



Double activation of argument from authority

The diagram below illustrates how, when Amram cites the God of Israel, the authority of God’s character is blended with Amram’s character as well as that of the author, in order to bolster the status and contentions of Amram vis-à-vis his opponents in the story while also strengthening the status and contentions of the implied author with respect to the readers of the text.

4.3.4 *Techniques: Analogy and Metaphor*

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca devote considerable space to the consideration of analogy and metaphor as rhetorical devices. Both possess significant argumentative value, in their eyes, because they cause one to “prefer one hypothesis to another.”⁵⁰

They describe analogy as a “resemblance of structures, the most general formulation of which is: A is to B as C is to D.”⁵¹ They call the terms of the conclusion, A and B, the *theme* and the terms that support the conclusion, C and D, the *phoros*. An asymmetrical relationship exists

⁵⁰ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 372.

⁵¹ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 372.

between theme and phoros, but what links them is the fact that the relationship between the two parts of the theme and the two parts of the phoros are somehow similar. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca also argue that theme and phoros must belong to different "spheres". They do not define a "sphere" but illustrate their examples by referring, for instance, to the sphere of the senses versus the sphere of the spiritual. By this reasoning, they distinguish between analogy and other forms of argument, such as argument by example or illustration.

An analogy involves, essentially, the "confrontation of theme and phoros; it does not at all imply that there was any preexisting relationship between their respective terms."⁵² They further state that the purpose of this confrontation is to "bring the terms A and C and B and D closer together, which leads to an interaction and, more specifically, to increasing or decreasing the value of the terms of the theme."⁵³ In other words—or, in cognitive linguistic parlance—analogy uses one mental construct to comment upon another. And as Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca note, sometimes the theme comments upon the phoros, as well: or, cognitively understood, there is interaction in the blend between the two inputs.

Analogy is used in argumentation and invention to "facilitate the development and extension of thought. With the phoros as starting point, [analogies] make it possible to give the theme a structure and to give it a conceptual setting."⁵⁴ Metaphor performs the same functions but, according to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, can go further by integrating an analogy into the language of a given culture.⁵⁵ In other words, these two tropes structure thinking.

For a cognitive linguist, however, it is not the phoros alone that structures thinking; it is the interaction between at least two inputs.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca view metaphor as a "condensed analogy, resulting from the fusion of an element from the phoros with an element from the theme."⁵⁶ They argue that this fusion results in the analogy being considered as a fact rather than a proposal. In a metaphor, according to their reasoning, the relationship between the

⁵² Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 377. Their observation that there is no need for pre-existing relationship between the terms used in analogy is supported by the findings of cognitive linguistics.

⁵³ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 378.

⁵⁴ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 385.

⁵⁵ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 410.

⁵⁶ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 399.

phoros and the theme is not necessarily closer than in an analogy, but the relation between them is “consecrated.”⁵⁷ This word is not defined, but it appears that the authors believe that such a relationship becomes part of cultural understanding and hence is not normally conscious and therefore subject to scrutiny.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca view metaphors as being subject to “erosion.” According to their analysis, erosion happens when the metaphor is no longer experienced as metaphoric—in their words, it becomes dormant. They argue that a dormant metaphor has significant value in argument because it has considerable persuasive strength—but only when it is “reactivated.”

A cognitive linguist would disagree with some parts of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s explanation of metaphor. Cognitive science argues that it is the status of metaphorical blends as part of one’s physiology and cultural milieu that makes them such potent devices for thinking. The use of the language of culturally accepted but unconscious metaphor allows one to design an argument that “makes sense” to the one listening because it matches conventional categories without ever bringing the metaphor to consciousness. Metaphors are most powerful as tools for thinking when they have NOT been “awakened,” reactivated, or brought to consciousness.

In addition, a cognitive analysis of metaphor and analogy sidesteps the questions of whether a given figure is an analogy with three parts or four parts, the exact relationship between theme and phoros, whether one is evoking an argument by example or a generalization, or whether the metaphor functions as a consecrated analogy or is a dormant metaphor being awakened. In cognitive terms, analogy and metaphor are simply blends, and the specific inputs are terms that share some kind of very simple generic structure.

4.4 A SHORT CRITIQUE OF PERELMAN AND OLBRECHTS-TYTECA ON METAPHOR

In their discussion of analogy, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca use this quote from Calvin as illustration: *That election of Amadeus [Duke of Savoy], duly solemnized by the authority of a general and holy council, went up in smoke, except that the aforesaid Amadeus was appeased by a cardinal’s hat, as a barking*

⁵⁷ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 401.

dog by a morsel.⁵⁸ By their analysis, the phoros is *barking dog, morsel*, while the theme is *Amadeus, cardinal's hat*.

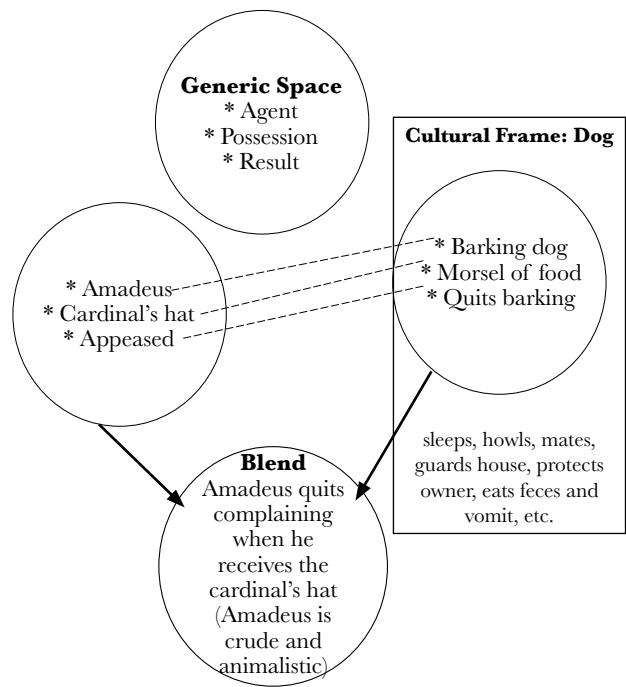
Using Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's reasoning, one begins by determining the relationship between a barking dog and a morsel. But in actuality, these two inputs come from the same cultural frame—or at least are expressed in the way that we see them as part of the same cognitive construction, a frame which includes information about dogs and their appetite for edible items, the noises that they make, their role as scavengers in 15th century communities, the possible danger posed by a dog that's barking at you, the fact that dogs are animals and generally seek to fulfill their natural desires, etc. The juxtaposition of *barking dog* and *morsel* will remind most readers that a dog can normally be silenced by food. This input, then, is combined with the input of *Amadeus, cardinal's hat* to give a blend where Amadeus is seen as a whining cur who can be shut up with a small bribe.

But the pejorative sense of the blend—or the analogy, if one uses the rhetorical terminology—is not present in the relationship between dog and morsel. Dogs are not necessarily contemptible because they quit barking when they are given food. Nor does Amadeus' pacification by appointment to the status of cardinal automatically indicate anything derogatory. One can be appeased without being foolish or venal. It is the blend of the two inputs that yields the sense of Amadeus as grasping and base. The analogy works as a whole, not in a two-step process. One could as easily have conceptualized the barking dog trying to warn its owner about danger, and being given a morsel as a reward. It is the combination of the conceptual spaces of both inputs that determines the ultimate meaning.

This is true whether one calls the literary trope being analyzed analogy or metaphor. If one said, instead, *Amadeus was a barking dog appeased by the morsel of a cardinal's hat*, the blend inputs and structure would be the same.

In both analogy and metaphor, the blending process takes known inputs and uses them to reason about, and with, other inputs. What makes both analogy and metaphor so powerful as rhetorical tools is that they use the structures of commonplace "knowledge"—or cognitive frames—as a method of reasoning about other information. This is what makes them appear both natural and powerful.

⁵⁸ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 378 (quoting Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Westminster) Prefatory Address to King Francis, pp. 26–27).



Blend Mapping for Analogy or Metaphor

4.5 SOME CONCLUSIONS ABOUT RHETORIC AND
CONCEPTUAL BLENDING

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca are involved, first, in a scheme of classification: their work is an attempt to ferret out the multiple containers into which different rhetorical devices fit. When strategies occupy their appropriate box, one can make a statement about the similarity of the argumentative process exhibited by each. As in any classical scheme of categories, each box fits into a larger category, and those are subsumed by yet another category. Though Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca recognize that the premises and figures that they analyze may fit into more than one box, they have no way to step back from their classification scheme. But as I noted earlier, classical categories not only do not exist; they are not particularly helpful in the analysis of language. The lability of classifications can make examination difficult.

At the beginning of this chapter, I argued that virtually every rhetorical form, regardless of the label or category to which they had been

assigned, would fit into a handful of cognitive structures. Because a cognitive linguistic analysis bypasses the issue of classical categories (and actually argues that they are not valid) and looks instead at function, it is possible to focus immediately on how the argument works rather than what type of argument it constitutes. Cognitive analysis is both simpler and clearer.

From a cognitive perspective, there are a very few different kinds of blends in the range of arguments that Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca examine. There are blends known as counterfactuals that invite one to choose between two or more possibilities simultaneously available for consideration. There are blends in which a cultural category/frame is brought into play in order to prove that the situation under discussion belongs—or does not belong—to a particular category. There are blends where one employs the input—frame/cultural category—introduced by an opponent, but selects a different part of that frame to emphasize, thereby giving the impression that one is using the same language and cognitive category but coming to a different conclusion. There are double and triple activation of blends (where effects spread upward from the original situation/person to affect the portrayal of other situations/people). All of these are variations on two scenarios: a blend that incorporates two or more inputs, and a cognitive situation where two or more competing blends are simultaneously activated (counterfactual). It is entirely possible to understand how argument works without enumerating a host of names for different types of arguments.

While a given argument can evoke multiple readings and diverse analyses—all of which one cannot possibly enumerate because the human mind is so creative—what one normally understands from a given statement is strongly constrained by cultural frames and human cognitive processes. Interpretation is not infinitely open. A cognitive perspective places restraints upon interpretation that rhetorical analysis does not have available.

It is possible to trace with meticulous detail the reasoning behind a given argument. One way to do that is to enumerate all the different rhetorical devices. But a more potent, straightforward, and integral way is to analyze the conceptual blends involved in the argument. Once one has identified the cognitive constructions involved, one can trace how each new statement builds, twists, and changes the previous argument.

4.6 COMPARATIVE READING: DONALD POLASKI AND PSEUDO-PHILO'S TAMAR

One might ask, given the many areas of agreement between rhetorical examination and cognitive linguistic analysis, whether the differences are significant. Does a cognitive analysis result in a different reading from that given by rhetorical methods, or is it just another way to arrive at the same reading? Are there any advantages to using cognitive methods when reading texts? If so, what are those advantages?

The best way to address this question is to take a current rhetorical study and compare its results with the results given by a cognitive investigation. Since Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca have not examined *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, this section will examine Donald Polaski's article, *On Taming Tamar: Amram's Rhetoric and Women's Roles in Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* 9.⁵⁹ In this article, Polaski uses a rhetorical analysis to assess Tamar's function in the text, and hence to examine whether Pseudo-Philo's treatment of women is indeed "extraordinarily positive."⁶⁰

A full cognitive analysis of Amram's argument, which includes his reference to and retelling of Tamar's story, is found in "Time Out of Joint," Chapter 5.2. I will not recapitulate that entire study here. Rather, I will address three claims made by Polaski. First, Polaski argues that the retelling of Tamar's story encourages the audience (in the text) to take on roles.⁶¹ Second, he argues that the introduction of Tamar into Amram's argument brings to mind the possibility that incest is a logical conclusion of Amram's proposals. As Polaski says, "...Amram must retell the Tamar story so it does not undo his argument... by focusing on the possibility that Tamar's situation might repeat itself in a way highly uncomfortable for the elders and himself."⁶²

Finally, Polaski concludes that there is an undercurrent in the retelling of Tamar's story of the "reckless pursuit of sexual pleasure."⁶³

⁵⁹ Polaski, "Taming Tamar," *JSP* 13 (1995) 79–99.

⁶⁰ Polaski poses his work as an inquiry into whether Pseudo-Philo exhibits "feminism," thereby mixing 21st century concepts with a first century text. Many scholars make this same error, trying to sort out if Pseudo-Philo is "feminist" without bothering to define what that word means or whether it could possibly apply to a first century text. I would argue strongly that one cannot possibly use such terms with any scholarly integrity about a writing that originated in a time and place so far removed from the present.

⁶¹ One could also note that such a retelling encourages those reading the text to take on the same roles also.

⁶² Polaski, "Taming Tamar," 99.

⁶³ Polaski, "Taming Tamar," 93.

He believes that reference to Tamar both supports and undermines Amram's argument, because Tamar is "... a seductress. Tamar's sexual power has the potential for overturning a male reappropriation of her story, just as she would not allow Judah to deny her sexuality."⁶⁴ Polaski argues that because the sexual part of her story is suppressed, Pseudo-Philo's treatment of women is therefore less positive.

Assuming Roles

Polaski's first point is consonant with a cognitive analysis. He is right that the retelling of Tamar's story allows those hearing it to cast themselves in certain roles and thereby evaluate their own behavior vis-à-vis this biblical story.

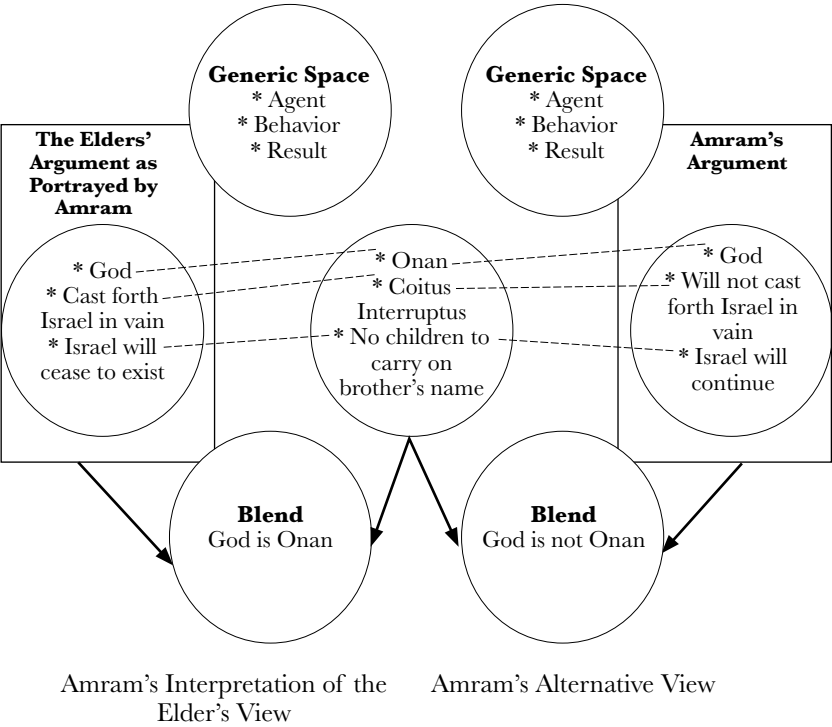
Where Polaski's analysis suffers here is in its lack of systematicity. He makes some, but not all, of the connections suggested by Amram's speech; and he leaps outside of the text at hand to bring in associations. While the associations are legitimate in terms of the original story line, they do not necessarily reflect the orientation of the text. Since Polaski claims that his inquiry is specifically intended to focus on the text as written, this technique is problematic.

Polaski correctly notes that God is presented as the anti-Onan when Amram claims, "[N]or will vainly he cast forth the race of Israel upon the earth." (*[N]eque genus Israel in vanum proiciet super terram.*) But this passage serves to do more than to argue that God is not Onan. It also constructs a counterfactual space that implies that the elders have accused God of being Onan. Amram's argument revises the elder's position in order to set up a contrast between himself and the elders. It is part of Amram's central argument that Israel must reproduce.

By alleging that the elders are accusing God of such inappropriate behavior, Amram is building support for his own view and undermining their perspective.

Polaski also sees that the elders can be compared to Onan, because they refuse to have children. But Polaski speculates on a literal connection between the elders and Onan, in that their decision may involve *coitus interruptus*. This is, of course, a possible blend given the original story. However, the text as written makes this link seem quite fanciful. A cognitive analysis would argue that the vital relation connecting Onan and the elders is the similarity in effect, not cause, of their behavior. It is the avoidance of procreation that link the two, not the specific

⁶⁴ Polaski, "Taming Tamar," 98.



strategy by which such avoidance is accomplished. In this case, Polaski appears to be reading in, rather than just reading. The text as written gives no indication that *coitus interruptus* is proposed.⁶⁵

Incest

Polaski argues that Amram's retelling of Tamar's story, because he leaves out indecorous details, "selectively silences and purifies Tamar's story in order to bolster his own argument."⁶⁶ It is true that introduc-

⁶⁵ The repeated use of *proicio*—it occurs four times in this chapter—is meant to draw our attention. Every time it is used, it refers to human beings, not bodily fluids. The only time open to interpretation is when Amram claims, *[I]f we are able, we will not cast forth the fruit of our womb. ([S]i potuerimus, non proiciemus fructum ventris nostri.)* But later, the elders say to him, "Wasn't this what we said to you when we spoke, 'It is better for us to die without having children than that the fruit of our womb be cast into the waters?'" (*Nonne hi erant sermones nostri quos locuti sumus dicentes: Melius est nobis sine filiis mori quam fructus ventris nostri in aquis proiciantur?*) It is clear that children are being referenced in these passages.

⁶⁶ Polaski, "Taming Tamar," 93.

ing Tamar into the argument brings not just the part of the story that Amram recounts, but the whole story including the seduction of Judah. However, this is true of any frame that one introduces into cognitive play. The introduction of a frame always brings with it excessive material, and one always selects from that material. Amram is doing nothing extraordinary here when he chooses to accent certain portions of the story. That is what argument does.

The other important point is that Tamar's tale is told within a context. The cognitive frames related to covenant fruitfulness have been activated, and continue to be mentally "present" throughout Amram's review of the Tamar narrative. This covenant fruitfulness is contrasted with the elder's idea that dying without children might be appropriate. Amram's argument raises the covenant repeatedly, and he overtly links Tamar to the risk she was willing to take to remain a member of the Israelite community. Tamar's story is linked to this situation because Tamar, in the biblical story, chose an Israelite child over no child or a child fathered by gentiles; and she chose that Israelite child in the face of possible death. The threat of death and the possibility of Israelite children are the primary links. Incest is not on the table.

Sexuality or Reproduction?

Amram begins Tamar's story with a statement of her rationale and closes it with the remark that her intention saved her. Amram tells the people exactly what Tamar's purpose was for her action: she was unwilling to be severed from the sons of Israel (*nolens recedere de filiis Israel*). It is this purpose, according to Amram, which saved her from all danger (*...salvavit eam consilium eius de omni periculo*).

Polaski misses the way that the cognitive frames shape the entire story of Tamar through the language of intention. Tamar's intention is to remain in community, and for community to remain. This cognitive framework is active throughout the recounting of the story, and reinforced at its end. Pseudo-Philo is telling us what part of the story to attend to. If one is reading the text on its own merits, it seems fair to attend to what the text desires.

Conclusion: Polaski's Rhetoric vs. Cognitive Linguistics

Polaski's analysis, while interesting, shows the inability of a rhetorical analysis to determine which part of a particular frame should be emphasized. He is distracted by the richness of the cognitive material

called up by the story of Tamar, and misses Amram's argument. Polaski views the fact that Amram repeatedly chose to emphasize one part of the frame—covenantal fruitfulness—and ignore the other part—involving incest—as a sly, possibly inappropriate telling of Tamar's story, rather than as the normal way that arguments proceed. He chooses to focus on Tamar as a willful woman whose sexual appetites have been hidden by Amram's recital. This reflects an idiosyncratic reading of the original story and a less-than-attentive reading of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. Rhetoric does not have the grounding that allows one to reject such an interpretation. However, a deliberate and systematic cognitive examination would have showed that these issues were not under discussion in the text.⁶⁷

While Polaski's intention is to respond to discussions about the status of women as viewed by Pseudo-Philo, his conclusions do not reflect the text at hand. His focus is on an issue that might have been presented rather than that which was presented, and he extrapolates from what was not said to determine what the text means to say about women.

It is certainly appropriate to say that the example used by Amram is not sufficiently cognitively compelling to make the desired point, or that the attendant associations of the Tamar story are too distracting. Polaski does this when he analyzes Amram's argument as an opponent would analyze it, to see what's persuasive and what can be turned against Amram. What Polaski is NOT doing is reading how the presentation of Tamar functions in the text at hand, how Amram (and Pseudo-Philo) intended for it to be understood, and what it means that a woman is used as the appropriate model for a community at risk. It would have been more appropriate to his discussion of Pseudo-Philo's treatment of women if he had explored the fact that Amram uses the story of a woman as a teaching tool for the male elders of the community, and that a woman is the appropriate model when the community is at risk.

⁶⁷ A more careful socio-cultural analysis would also have helped avoid some of these problems. Polaski seems to dabble here with a deconstructionist reading, which he licenses by calling it rhetorical.

PART THREE

ANALYZING *LIBER ANTIQUITATUM BIBLICARUM*
WITH COGNITIVE METHODS

CHAPTER FIVE

REWRITTEN BIBLE AS CONCEPTUAL BLEND: ESTABLISHING AUTHORITY IN PSEUDO-PHILO

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Having discussed the contemporary theory of conceptual blending and analyzed both narrative and rhetorical strategies in terms of the kinds of conceptual blends that they construct, it is now time to focus on how Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* makes meaning, and what meaning it makes. What kinds of blends epitomize this text, and what are the implications of such blends?

The purpose of this monograph is to identify to whom authority is awarded, how authority is retained and expressed, and how the stories of women relate to this broad theme. I will begin to address these issues by analyzing how the overall structure of the text itself evokes authority (Chapter Five). I will then demonstrate how retelling biblical stories in a new setting (Chapter Six) and reshaping common biblical metaphors (Chapter Seven) presents the author's theological insights as authoritative.

In Chapter Eight, I will examine how acknowledged leaders are portrayed, looking at the phenomena of quotation, allusion, and commentary, while Chapter Nine will explore the nature of humility appropriate to leaders in *LAB*, and include a brief survey of the text's view of humanity and Israel in general, and the need for repentance.

Chapter Ten will recap the arguments of scholars regarding the women of Pseudo-Philo, and develop a "local definition" of *mater* as defined by this text.

In Chapter Eleven, I will present my conclusions, along with final arguments on the efficacy of cognitive theory on an ancient text. In light of the definition of *mater* that resulted from the research outlined in the previous chapter, I will argue that women's stories are central to the message of Pseudo-Philo. It is my contention that even those women who are not represented as authorities in the Bible will show characteristics of authority in Pseudo-Philo, and that their stories are used to shed light on important theological and ideological concepts in this text.

5.2 RE-WRITTEN BIBLE AS A CONCEPTUAL BLEND

Prior to assessing what Pseudo-Philo might actually mean to say, it is important to consider just how *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* functions as a whole text. This analysis is essential to any theory of how this text was intended to function in the community.

Perhaps the most important and pervasive narrative characteristic of *LAB* is the result of the author's profound knowledge of the biblical text. This familiarity is clear in the regular quotations and echoes from all over the Bible. Quotations are seamlessly woven into and integrated into the author's narrative...¹

Everyone who reads Pseudo-Philo notices that biblical language permeates the text. More than any other of the "re-written bibles"—possibly excepting Jubilees or the Genesis Apocryphon—Pseudo-Philo unceasingly mimics biblical vocabulary and phrasing. The degree of similarity to the biblical text has led some scholars to believe that Pseudo-Philo was actually copying from a biblical text: Harrington argued in 1971 that *LAB* was based on a Palestinian text type now extinct.² Jacobson, in contrast, conjectures that the author was working from memory. Jacobson's theory is more consistent with the evidence that the small differences, which mimic standard biblical prose, are not consistently drawn from known texts. Jacobson believes that these small variations often reflect a "more commonplace biblical idiom" than the phrase actually found in the biblical text.³

However the author arrived at the text, whether by memory or consultation with multiple texts or use of a text-type yet unknown, the biblical flavor of Pseudo-Philo is undeniable. This is most noticeable when one examines the additions to the biblical story, such as Deborah's last testament, in chapter 33. While the content of Deborah's instructions to the people is novel, the chapter emphasizes its biblical stance by closing with the formula "Deborah died and slept with her fathers and was buried in the city of her fathers." The report that an Israelite leader died and was buried in a particular place is common to the book

¹ Jacobson, *Commentary*, 224.

² Harrington, "Biblical Text," 16.

³ For example, Jacobson cites 23.1, where Pseudo-Philo writes that Joshua "sent and summoned all Israel" as opposed to the biblical parallel at Josh.23.2 where Joshua only summons. The two-part phrase is more common generally, even though it was not used in that particular instance.

of Judges (see, for instance, Judges 12:7–13). The notice that a leader slept with his fathers and was buried (with them) in the city of David is common to the kings of Israel (e.g., 1Ki 22:50).⁴ This conflated ending uses all the formulaic language possible to refer to the demise of an important Israelite leader.

This biblicized language has often encouraged commentators to attempt to identify the exact source of a given sentence fragment in some other biblical passage. Sometimes this search for original placement provides insight into the text, as when Pseudo-Philo uses the fragment of one biblical story to provide commentary on another.⁵ At times, however, the search for an exact source can obscure one of the most powerful effects of biblical tropes. Conceptually, the repetition of common language patterns evokes the Biblical source, and hence provides legitimacy to the text and the author.

For this reason, narratives are framed at the beginning and end of episodes with biblical style speech; the omniscient narrator, in biblical style, allows important characters present their lives through speeches and through internal thoughts formed as speech. Also in biblical style, there is little commentary on characters by the narrator. When Pseudo-Philo re-tells a biblical story, while some sections are condensed or skipped, or some characters named and their motivations explained, the same characters participate in the same events as in the original version. This is the first conceptual blend of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*: the almost invisible blend of re-written bible itself, the cognitive work performed when one writes in a biblical “style”.

Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum retells the bible from Genesis through 1 Kings. This retelling has no breaks and no indication that the author is attempting to separate her version of the stories from the biblical version. Interpretation is not set off, as it is in midrash, by an announcement of interpretation; the text simply flows from one event to another. The added details, commentary, and characters are included as if they belonged; likewise, the deletions are seamless.

⁴ The absence of a named city in which Deborah was buried is likely due to the fact that Deborah’s ancestry goes unrecorded in the biblical text.

⁵ See, for instance, Fisk, *Do You Not Remember*, 19–21. While I would agree with Fisk that the extensive interpolation of one story into another is meant to use scripture as commentary on other scripture, the text is so rife with biblical language that it cannot all be intended as commentary.

There are other extra-biblical documents—e.g., Enoch, Jubilees, and Qumran pesherim—that interpret the biblical text in much the same way: the interpretation is never acknowledged within the text as interpretation. The one-time original revelation of the biblical books seems to have been regarded as unique by the authors of these later documents, but at the same time, they apparently felt free to provide prophetic elucidation of biblical characters and events. One must assume that the author's community had a need for the contemporary interpretation that these re-written texts provided. These re-written bibles were not an attempt to replace the biblical text but rather to bring particular interpretations of the sacred story directly into the text.⁶ This re-interpretation was likely felt to partake of divine inspiration, as in the case of the Qumran pesherim.⁷ While this may seem audacious or even ridiculous to a modern interpreter, one must remember that the present day marginal status of these extra-biblical books does not necessarily indicate that the texts were similarly marginalized in their own time.

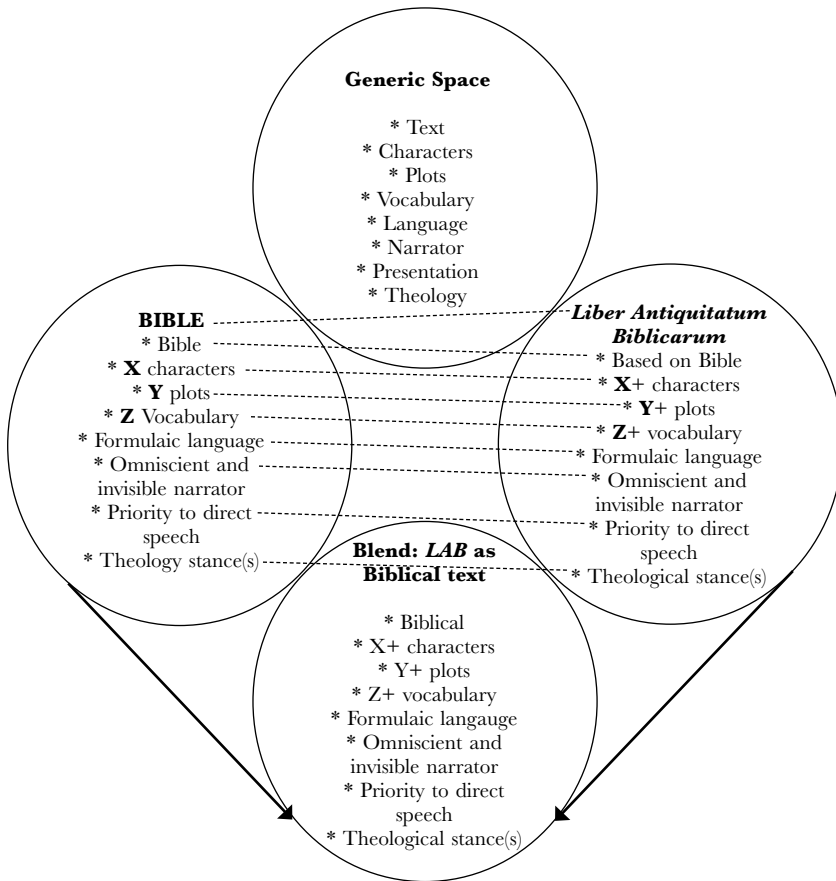
This authority, of course, depends on the success of the blend in the mind of the reader. Obviously, the believability of the blend—i.e., how much authority a given reader might allow to the text—depends on how successfully the text conforms to biblical convention. Should the author stray too far from the original text's style or theology, or invoke concepts which are too different from the reader's world view, then the attempt to blend the biblical text and a later text becomes noticeable to the reader and hence subject to scrutiny.

Certain conventions would be important to observe in order to assure that the blends works smoothly. These would include use of known biblical characters and plots, vocabulary and phrasing similar to biblical vocabulary and phrasing, (e.g., formulaic language to open and close scenes, introduce characters, etc.), comparable theology, and corresponding narrative style (priority to direct speech, omniscient narrator, etc.). All of these conventions fit into a frame (a complex blend) that readers of the time would have recognized as "biblical".

The diagram below shows how the conceptual blend "re-written bible" works.

⁶ Pseudo-Philo accomplishes this in a number of ways, most particularly the injection of biblical passages and personages into other passages.

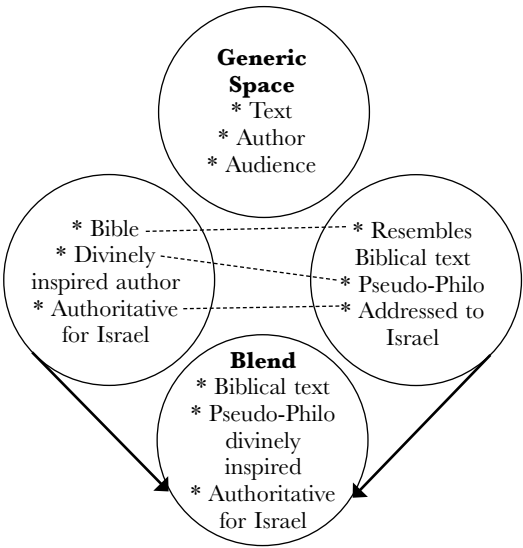
⁷ So Lawrence Schiffman regarding the Qumran pesherim, "Modification of Biblical Law and the Temple Scroll" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the SBL, Toronto, Canada, 24 November, 2003).



Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum as Biblical Text

While sections of the Hebrew Bible differ vastly from each other—contrast, for instance, the Psalms with Chronicles—*Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* has generally employed the appropriate style in the appropriate place: e.g., the re-telling of the book of Judges uses literary techniques similar to the original text. The plots are generally the plots of the original story; the characters are generally the characters of the original story. The additions, such as the chapters about the hero Kenaz, expand upon, take as a starting place, or use tropes from other biblical accounts.

Once one has invoked the biblical form, there is another conceptual blend available for reasoning. That blend is powerful and compelling, because there is compression as well as analogy between the biblical



LAB as Divinely Inspired Text

text and the text that resembles it, between the author and the original divinely inspired author(s), and between the authority of the original text and the revised text. In the blend, the author gets the quality of divine inspiration, and the text gets the quality of authority for the community. The re-written text never becomes “The Bible”, but it becomes biblical, i.e., religiously authoritative.

This same kind of cognitive construction is what allowed the book of Jubilees and the Qumran pesherim to become authoritative for the communities that read them. It may be that the text of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* possessed similar influence at some time for some specific community.⁸ It is very likely that the communities in question viewed the authors of these texts as divinely inspired and the text itself as authoritative for the community.

⁸ It is, of course, equally possible to mimic the conventions of a text for reasons other than inducing the authority of the text. One could use biblical techniques to craft a parody of the original. However, *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, *Jubilees* and the Qumran pesherim give no indication of being intended as parodies.

5.3 ANOTHER KIND OF AUTHORITY

As mentioned above, the author of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* regularly inserts the summary of a biblical story into a context other than its original setting. Bruce Fisk's work has provided the most satisfying analysis of these "intrusions": he sees them as a form of exegesis on the primary text, either negating the meaning of the primary text *per se*, or, being reformulated themselves, providing a new theological commentary on the primary text.⁹

I believe Fisk's assertions are correct, in so far as he understands that Pseudo-Philo's revisions were most likely heard as explication—rather than alteration—of the original meaning. But Fisk wants to argue that Pseudo-Philo writes from

...a *hermeneutical* conviction that the key for unlocking Scripture's meaning is to be found in *Scripture*...there is an observable symmetry between Pseudo-Philo's *explicit* statement about God's faithfulness throughout Israel's history and his *implicit* claim—advanced by deploying secondary Scripture—that Israel's story is self-explanatory, self-glossing, and internally consistent."¹⁰

However one may wish to acknowledge that Pseudo-Philo feels Israel's story is self-explanatory, self-glossing, and internally consistent, the fact remains that Pseudo-Philo is the one who decides which passage should explain or gloss another passage. Not only does Pseudo-Philo choose to apply particular texts in a given situation, she also interprets these texts, sometimes in ways that appear to stray far from their original sense. Pseudo-Philo's goal, overall, is to render the biblical stories consistent with her own worldview. The fact that she does this by using other scriptural passages in the process points not only to her hermeneutical schema, but also to her inventiveness.

What happens unconsciously in these re-worked passages is that the reader's knowledge of how the story ended, and the judgment rendered by that ending, is added into the conceptual blend. Because one knows the ending, one knows who is good or bad, justified or punished. When Pseudo-Philo puts words into the mouth of a person who has been proven faithful by the biblical text, the result is a conceptual blend

⁹ Fisk, *Do You Not Remember*, 321–330.

¹⁰ Fisk, *Do You Not Remember*, 327. Emphasis is Fisk's.

where those words carry added positive force. Tamar lives; therefore seducing Judah was justified; therefore her reasoning behind the seduction is justified. Amram begot a child when children were at risk, but that child went on to save his people, therefore Amram's conduct was appropriate and his theological analysis of the situation correct.

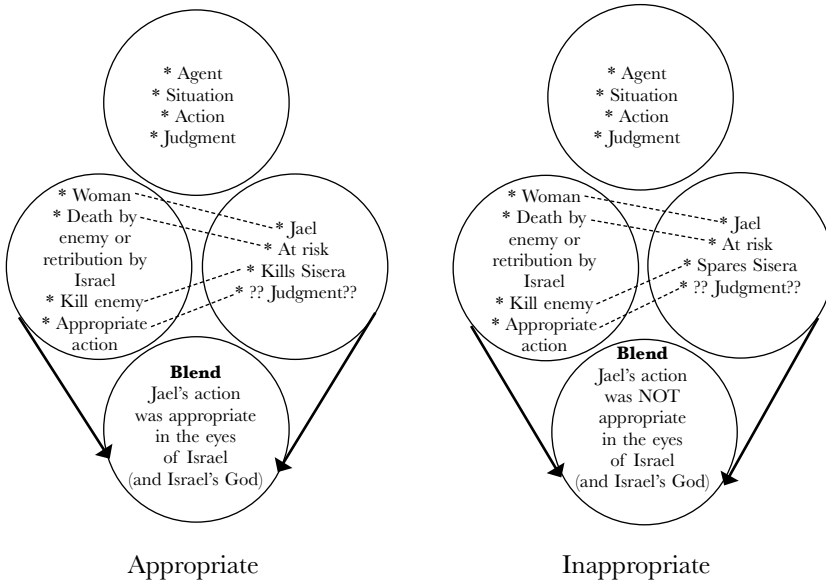
This unconscious "side effect" in Pseudo-Philo's retelling legitimates both the original character and his or her interpretation.¹¹ And this "side effect" floats up two levels. Legitimacy accrues not only to the original character—such as Tamar—but when Tamar's story is inserted into Amram's argument, Amram is also legitimated; and Pseudo-Philo, the teller of the tale, also is granted authority.

I will address this phenomenon in depth in the section on interjection and interpretation of biblical stories (Chapter Six), but below is a general schema of the way such a story would work conceptually.

The original (biblical) story would present a person at risk: for instance, the commander Sisera comes to Jael's tent and asks for shelter and sustenance. Jael is at risk both from Sisera and from the Israelites: if she does not assist him, he may kill her; whatever she does, he may kidnap her; and if the Israelites find out she is aiding their enemy, she could suffer retribution. She chooses to kill Sisera, and is honored by Israel for her behavior.¹² Therefore, Jael is legitimated (in so far as a foreign woman can be!). Her situation can be represented by a set of counterfactual blends.

¹¹ I say side effect, but as with a drug, there are no side effects. There are merely the effects that you hope will occur and the ones that you hope will not. Side effect depends on perspective.

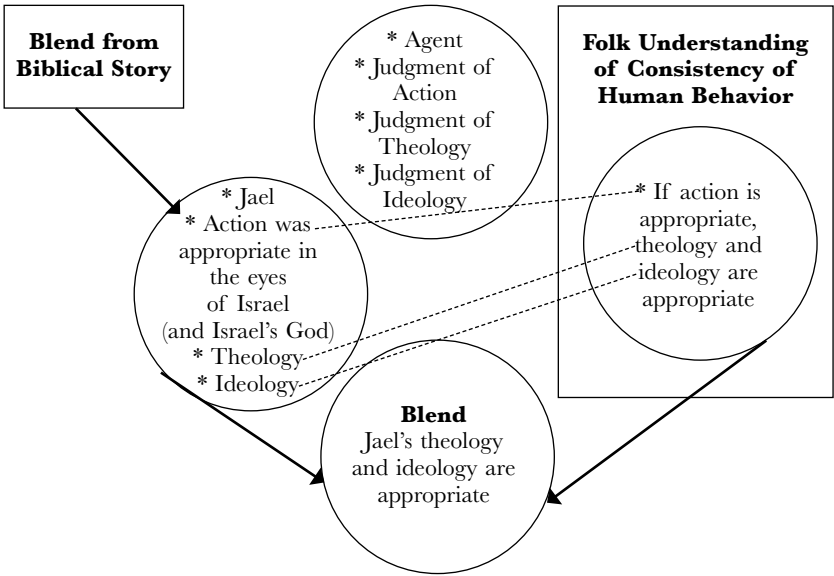
¹² At least in the song of Deborah. Barak may not have felt the same way, given Jael's triumphal remarks to him.



Analysis of Biblical Jael

When Pseudo-Philo retells the story of Jael, the same conditions hold: Sisera could kill Jael, Israel could punish her for helping him. The risk of kidnapping is made overt. In *LAB*'s version, Jael offers numerous lengthy prayers to the God of Israel asking for guidance and assistance in her decision to kill Sisera. In the course of these prayers she presents a theology that gives the God of Israel credit for creating all peoples and choosing Israel specially. Her theology also argues that God strengthens those who support Israel even when the supporter is not Israelite, and when the work to be done involves killing. Finally, Jael's theological understanding includes the fact that all things occur just as God intends. The ideology presented by Jael's speeches emphasize the capacity of the females in God's flock to sustain the flock, the shamefulness of a man being killed by a woman, the remarkability of a woman killing an enemy combatant, and the fact that this amazing event occurred because the God of Israel desired it; therefore, the God of Israel can defeat the strongest of men with only the hand of a woman, should God so desire. Unconsciously, the reader blends the result of the biblical blends with *LAB*'s theological and ideological interpretations; and they are legitimated.

Obviously, this is a very schematized diagram of the conceptual blends at work. The actual process is much more complex, but the overall thrust is the same: the character who is judged positively in the biblical text carries that positive evaluation into their speech-acts in Pseudo-Philo.¹³



Jael's Theology and Ideology are Appropriate in *LAB*

¹³ What is interesting to note is that the Bible does not make clear judgments on some characters—why did Jephthah's daughter die if she was innocent? Why was the Levite's concubine raped and killed? Was Gideon good or bad, since he was selected by God but later became an idolater? These characters are exactly the ones where Pseudo-Philo feels the need to “complete the blend”—find a reason for what happened to them, either in their own behavior or the behavior of others.

CHAPTER SIX

BIBLICAL INSERTIONS: TIME OUT OF JOINT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Five, I addressed how the insertion of the summary of a biblical tale into a context other than the original setting works cognitively. As noted above, the reader already knows the conclusion of the story, and hence the theological and ideological perspectives of the main character carry extra authority. In the following section, I would like to explore in depth how this phenomenon works.

Neglected in *LAB*'s brief summation of Genesis, Tamar appears instead in a speech given by the character Amram when Israel is suffering in Egypt. The addition of Tamar's story serves two purposes within the narrative. First, Pseudo-Philo draws conclusions from the insertion itself and includes these conclusions within Tamar's story. While the original biblical tale does not elucidate the reasoning behind Tamar's act, the text of Pseudo-Philo specifies Tamar's motivation clearly. Cognitively speaking, Pseudo-Philo is completing the blend.

Then, after the salient point is made in Tamar's inserted story, that same point is used to complete a blend in the larger, original story. The author has extracted a moral lesson from a biblical figure and applies it to the story at hand. It is important to note, however, that the moral lesson being drawn is not necessarily apparent in the original version. Pseudo-Philo has framed the story in such a way as to make the conclusion inescapable.

To examine Tamar's story, we begin in chapter nine. The Israelites have been multiplying in Egypt, and their fecundity is disturbing to the Egyptians. Pharaoh calls a meeting, and a plot is devised to drown male children and to give female children to Egyptian slaves, in order to produce more slaves.

6.2 THE ELDERS' ARGUMENT

The Israelite elders also call a meeting. Faced with the threat of death or slavery for their children, they suggest sexual abstinence for the

entire community. The elders' reasoning is based on the desire to avoid idolatry—which they believe to be the certain effect of intermarriage—and death.

Tunc seniores populi congregaverunt populum cum planctu et planxerunt cum luctu dicentes: Ometocean passa sunt viscera mulierum nostratum, fructus noster inimicis nostris traditus est. Et nunc deficiamus et constituamus nobis terminos ut non appropinquet mulieri sue vir, ne fructus ventris earum contaminetur et viscera nostra idolis serviant. Melius est enim sine filiis mori, donec sciamus quid faciat Deus.

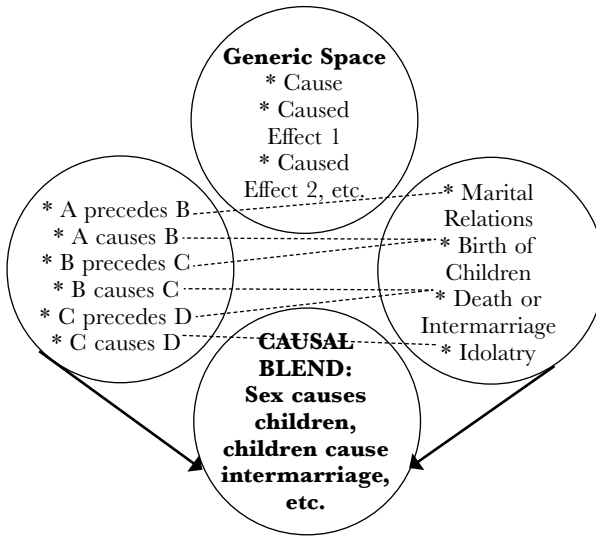
Then the elders of the people gathered the people together in mourning, and they mourned with lamentation, saying, “The wombs of our wives have lost their children; our fruit is delivered to our enemies. Now let us make a resolution and let us establish a rule for ourselves that a man should not approach his wife lest the fruit of their wombs be defiled and our offspring serve idols. For it is better to die without children, until we know what God does. (*LAB* 9:2)

These two evils are linked through the compression of cause and caused effect in the elder's reasoning. Marital relations result in the birth of children: sex is clearly a cause, and children a caused effect. In the reasoning of the elders, this cause/caused effect relationship applies all through the chain of consequences: the birth of children is causal for the death of male children¹ and marriage of female children to Egyptian slaves, and the marriage of females to Egyptian slaves is causal for idolatry. Each caused effect acts as a cause to the next effect.

Close examination surely shows that Hebrew children do not cause their own death or intermarriage, and that intermarriage need not necessarily cause idolatry—one's spouse could convert, for instance. These bad results stem from the behavior of the Egyptians, not from the birth of children. Nonetheless, the reasoning of the elders is based upon these causal linkages.²

¹ While the death of male children is mentioned, nowhere is it addressed as a moral issue in the same way that intermarriage of female children is. If these two issues had been treated equally in the text, one would expect that the law against committing murder would also have been evoked. But it is not.

² These linkages are not ridiculous: it is surely true that if the Egyptians behave as they have outlined, male children will die and female children may end up idolaters. But neither are they as tightly connected as the elders have argued.



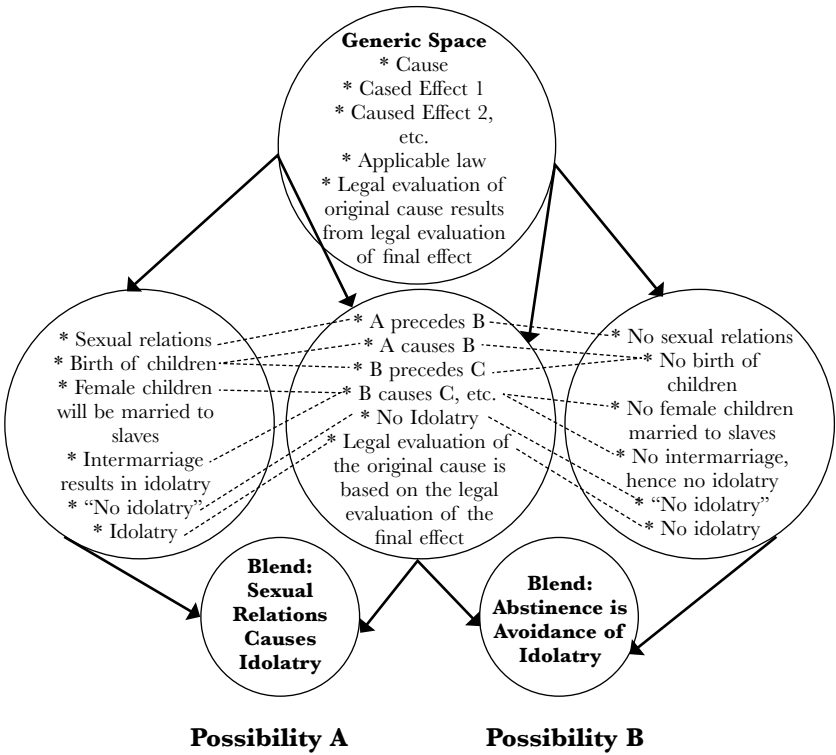
Causal Compression in the Elders' Argument

Once the causal relationships are established between sex and idolatry, the final conclusion is clear. If the female children (and their children) become idolaters, then the parent's behavior is the cause. Therefore, sexual contact with one's spouse equates to idolatry.³ (See Counterfactual Alternatives, diagram on L.)

The appropriate response to the probable reality, according to the elders, is to refrain from sexual contact with one's spouse. Only in this way can one avoid the corruption of one's offspring. Cognitively, their proposal functions as a counterfactual space to the cognitive construction described above. (See Counterfactual Alternatives, diagram on R.)

However, the elders' references to children as the fruit of the wombs of women as well as the fruit of the (male) speakers, (*ometoceam viscera mulierum nostrarum* and *fructus noster, fructus ventris earum* and *viscera nostra*), have introduced the cognitive frame of reproduction. While they have declared that it is better to die childless (*melius est enim sine filiis mori...*), it is their fruitfulness that got them into this trouble. That fruitfulness is both the result of God's command (3:11) and a sign of God's presence (4:11). The elders may have appropriately discerned the problem facing

³ In the blending diagrams, all phrases in quotes (e.g., "No idolatry") serve as shorthand references to a specific law or cultural convention.



Counterfactual Alternatives Introduced by the Elders' Arguments

them, but their plan is not in harmony with covenant obligations, as Pseudo-Philo tells the story.⁴

6.3 AMRAM'S REBUTTAL

Amram picks up the references to reproduction in his response and uses them to argue that a different law is applicable to the situation. He cites proof of God's constancy⁵, and speaks of the impossibility that God will let the Israelites be destroyed. He argues against the idea that

⁴ Murphy argues the elders' plan is flawed because they, rather than God, initiated it. (*Pseudo-Philo*, 53.) But neither does God initiate Amram's plan, so this argument does not hold.

⁵ See "Repetition" under Rhetoric in chapter 3.

God would ever “cast forth” Israel into nothingness upon the earth.⁶ Amram directs the attention of the community to God’s promises as well as God’s command to be fruitful and multiply, rather than the injunction against idolatry.

Et respondit Amram et dixit: Celerius est ut in victoria minuatur seculum aut in inmensurabile mundus concidat aut cor abissi astra contingant, quam genus filiorum Israel minuatur. Et erit cum impletum fuerit testamentum, quod disponens Deus locutus est ad Abraham dicens: Habitando habitabunt nati tui in terra non sua, et in servitute redigentur et affligentur annis CCCC. Et ecce ex quo inventus est sermo Dei quem dixit ad Abraham, sunt anni CCCL; ex eo quod nos in Egipto servimus, anni sunt CXXX.

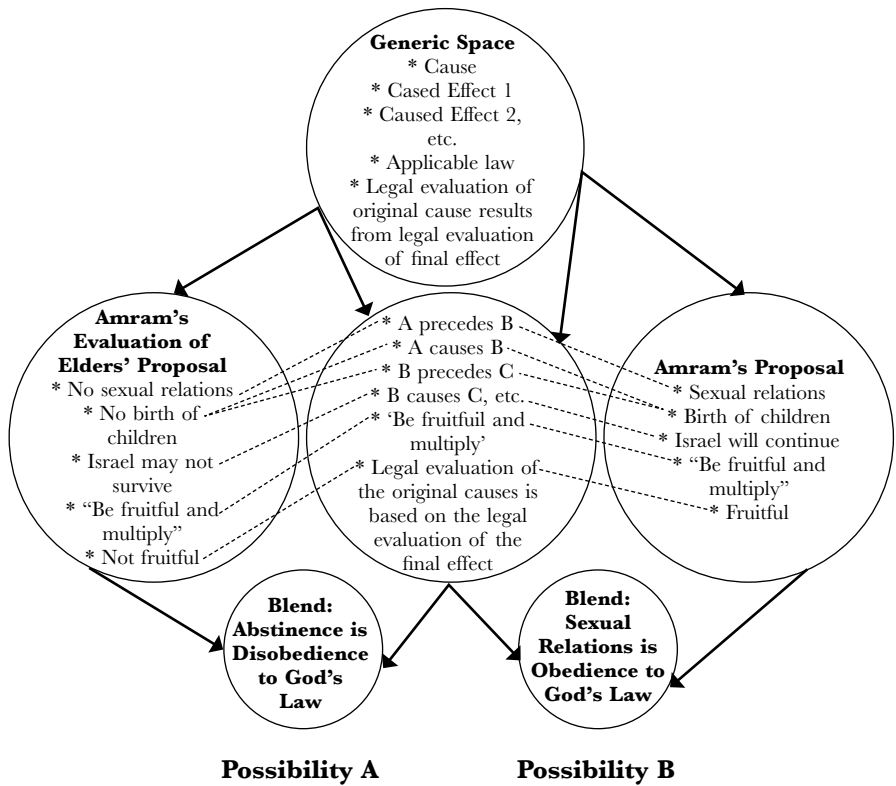
Nunc ergo non permanebo in his que vos determinatis, sed ingrediens mulierem meam accipiam et faciam filios, ut amplificemur super terram. Non enim permanebit Deus in ira sua, nec semper obliviscetur populi sui, neque genus Israel in vanum proiciet super terram; nec in vanum disposuit testametum patribus nostris, et cum adhuc non essemus de his tamen locutus est Deus.

Amram answered and said, “Sooner will the world be destroyed forever or the universe sink into the immeasurable or the heart of the deep touch the stars than that the race of the sons of Israel will be destroyed. Some day the covenant will be fulfilled, that he established with Abraham and said, ‘Your sons will dwell in a land not their own and will be reduced to slavery and afflicted 400 years.’ And behold from the time when the word of God that he spoke to Abraham was spoken, it is 350 years; from the time when we became slaves in Egypt, it is 130 years.

Accordingly now I will not abide by what you decree, but I will go in and take my wife and produce children so that we will multiply upon the earth. For God will not continue in his anger, nor will he forget his people forever, nor will he cast forth the race of Israel into nothingness upon the earth; nor did he emptily establish a covenant with our fathers. When we did not yet exist, God nonetheless spoke about these things.” (LAB 9:3–4)

Cognitively, Amram’s arguments evoke another set of counterfactual spaces, similar to those used by the elders in that one presents a situation where sexual contact takes place and the other shows what happens when marital relations are avoided. But the blends resulting from these two spaces are radically different than the blends predicted in the mental spaces of the elders’ arguments, because the inputs themselves are so different.

⁶ Polaski (*Taming Tamar*, 89–91) has astutely noted the reference to Tamar’s 2nd husband, Onan, here.



Counterfactual Alternatives Introduced by the Amram' Arguments

Like the elders, Amram seeks to prevent the destruction of Israel. Amram's arguments use two inputs identical in structure to those of the elders: the generic space and an input outlining the way an action can be judged by a secondary result. But Amram substitutes the command "be fruitful and multiply" for the elders' prohibition "no idolatry". His construction shows how their recommendation not to have marital relations (and hence children) makes them guilty of disobedience to God.⁷

From Amram's perspective, both the elder's fearful vision of the future, and their plan to avoid that future, result in a diminished, dying Israel. He argues that Israel can only continue IF children are born.

⁷ Amram does not address the question of avoidance of idolatry. It appears that he feels the whole problem will be solved before such apostasy can occur.

Amram sees God as ever faithful to Israel. Israel, in turn, must be faithful to God: the community's actions must cohere to God's purpose if God is to preserve Israel. Again, the alternative futures are actually counterfactual cognitive blends.

Amram's arguments present a blend where the link between marital relations and idolatry is snapped. Only the directive about fruitfulness and God's promises are considered. Amram trumps the restrictions of the elders with the assurances of God.

Having established that Israel's job is to multiply upon the earth, Amram rejects the "orders of the king" which he has cognitively blended with the directives of the elders, hence casting new aspersions upon the elders' judgment.⁸ Announcing that he will have intercourse with his wife in order to further the goal of fruitfulness, Amram encourages others to do so also. When their wives conceive, he says, they can hide the pregnancy for 3 months, as did Tamar.

Nunc ergo iens accipiam mulierem meam, et non adquiescam preceptis regis; et si rectum est ante oculos vestros, ita faciamus omnes. Erit enim cum concipient mulieres nostre, non agnoscentur tamquam in utero habentes, quousque compleantur menses tres, sicut et fecit mater nostra Tamar; quia non fuit consilium eius in fornicatione, sed nolens recedere de filiis Israel recogitans dixit: Melius est mihi socero meo commixta mori, quam gentibus commisceri. Et abscondit fructum ventris sui usque ad tertium memsem. Tunc enim agnita est. Et iens ut interficeretur, statuit hoc dicens: Cuius est hec virga et hic anulus et melotis, de eo concepi. Et salvavit eam consilium eius de omni periculo.

Now therefore I will go and take my wife, and I will not consent to the orders of the king; if it is right in your eyes, so let us all do. For when our wives conceive, they will not be recognized as pregnant until three months have passed, as also our mother Tamar did. For her intention was not to commit fornication, but being unwilling to separate from the sons of Israel she so reflected and said: 'It is better for me to have intercourse with my father-in-law and die than to have intercourse with gentiles.' And she hid the fruit of her womb until the third month. For then she was recognized. When going to her execution, she stopped and said, 'The man to whom belong this staff and signet ring and the sheepskin, from him I have conceived.' Her purpose saved her from all danger. (*LAB* 9:5)

⁸ The cognitive blend is similar to the blend that happens in part/whole inclusion. In this case, the elders and the king are conflated, or linked through vital relations, as are their respective decrees. The bad intentions of the king can sneak into the blend and influence how one sees the elders.

Amram's invocation of Tamar introduces a new series of cognitive blends. But the question that Amram introduced to the argument, "Which law are we supposed to obey in order to be faithful?" is still under discussion. Amram uses Tamar to reinforce his contention.

6.4 ENTER TAMAR

Pseudo-Philo's ancient readers⁹ would have had two broad cultural frameworks available to them about the story of Tamar. The first frame would contain the laws and mores regarding marriage and the appropriate sexual behavior of women, consisting of something like the following:

- Marriage is legal relationship between two families involving contracts and agreements.
- Endogamous marriage is preferred as it maintains and preserves the Jewish community.
- Sexual relations are an obligatory act, as the primary purpose of marriage is to produce offspring.¹⁰
- Marriage is patrilocal.
- Adultery is punishable by death. For married women, sex with anyone but one's husband is adultery. For men, sex with another man's wife is adultery.
- Women may have only one living husband. Men may have multiple wives.
- A betrothed woman is bound by the same laws regarding sexual behavior as is a married woman.
- For women, if a marriage resulted in children, re-marriage is permitted after divorce or death of husband (though one may never re-marry a divorced spouse).
- For women, if the marriage is childless and the husband dies, she must marry a brother (or other closest relative allowed by law) of her deceased husband, unless he refuses.

Ancient readers of Pseudo-Philo also would have cultural knowledge of the biblical story of Tamar, and know that her first two husbands

⁹ As well as the people actually "in" the story.

¹⁰ Tal Ilan, *Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Palestine*, (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1996; repr., Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1996) 107. She cites both Josephus and the rabbis.

were brothers, and that both had died, leaving her childless. They would know that Tamar's family had a betrothal agreement with Judah for his youngest and only living son, so that Tamar was legally required to conduct herself as a married woman. They would know that Tamar had been sent from Judah's house to live with her parents, as if she were engaged and not a part of Judah's family. Readers would also understand that Judah had not honored the betrothal agreement. They would know that Tamar pretended to be a temple prostitute in order to get pregnant by Judah, that she hid her pregnancy for three months, that she was found out, that Judah had condemned her to die for adultery, that she produced Judah's personal items on the way to her stoning, that Judah deemed her more righteous than himself and that she lived to give birth to twins, who were the ancestors of the present Israelite community.

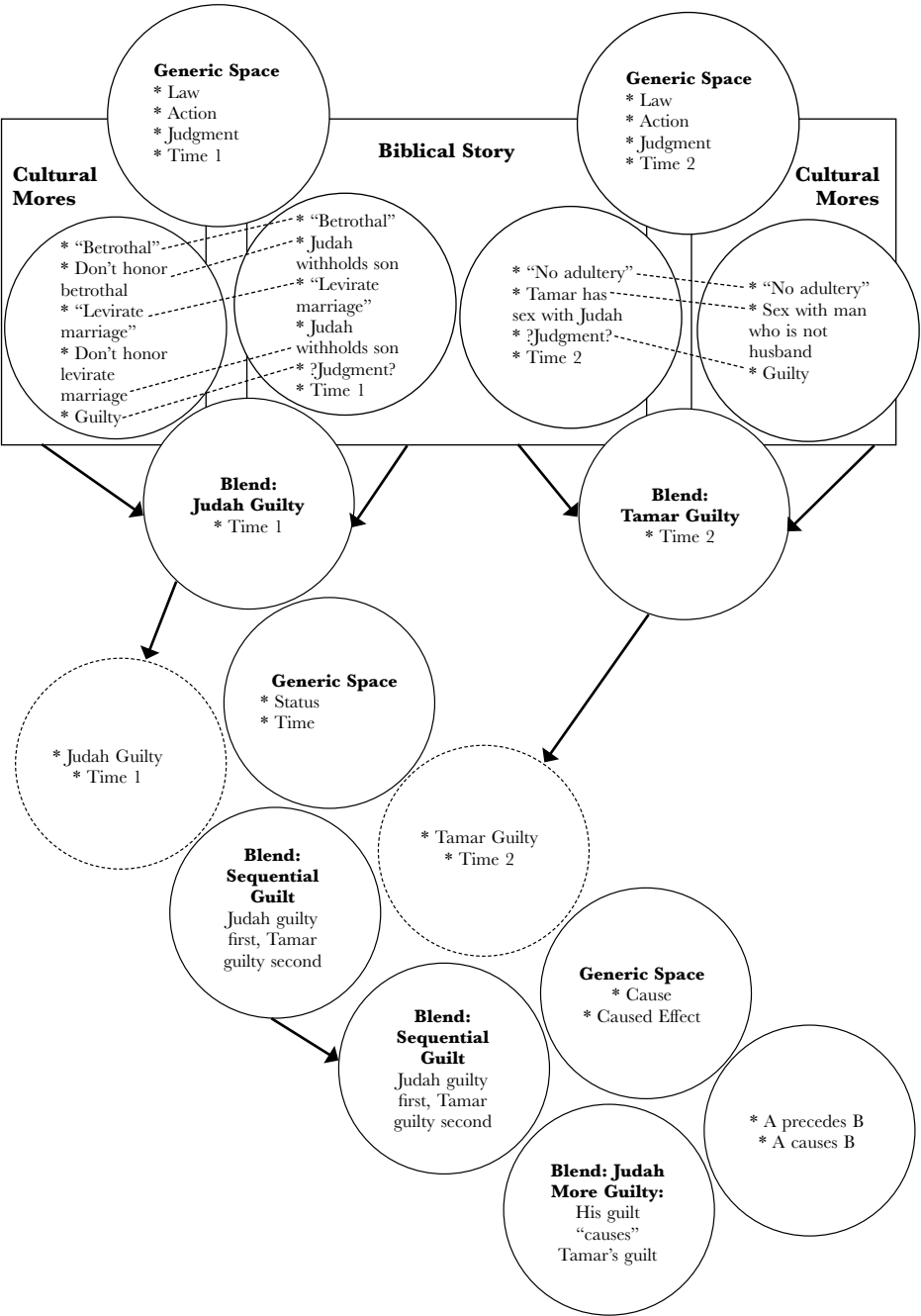
The diagram "Biblical Tamar" shows the blends at work in the biblical story of Tamar.

In the biblical story, Tamar is found "Less Guilty" rather than "Not Guilty". Judah declares that she is more righteous than he, because he abrogated the betrothal contract whereby he would provide her with his son in order to raise up sons for her first husband. Tamar is not, however, innocent: she has had a sexual relationship with a man other than her husband or betrothed. But Judah broke the law first. It was his guilt that necessitated hers. A reader knows this because of the outcome—Tamar lived. The crucial legal blend was not based solely on the adultery laws, but the laws and mores about reproduction, continuity of family, and the sanctity of covenants.

In Amram's re-telling of the story, he says that Tamar's intention was not to commit fornication, but to avoid sexual relations with gentiles. This is exactly the fate from which the elders are hoping to preserve their daughters.

Amram's presentation re-introduces the questions of the biblical story. Once more the reader is asked to assess if Tamar's actions were adulterous. But instead of blending the assessment of her behavior with Judah's behavior in order to reach a judgment, Pseudo-Philo introduces a new blend based on the injunction against intermarriage. Tamar's decision becomes necessary not only because of Judah's behavior, but also because it is the only way for her to avoid exogamous marriage.

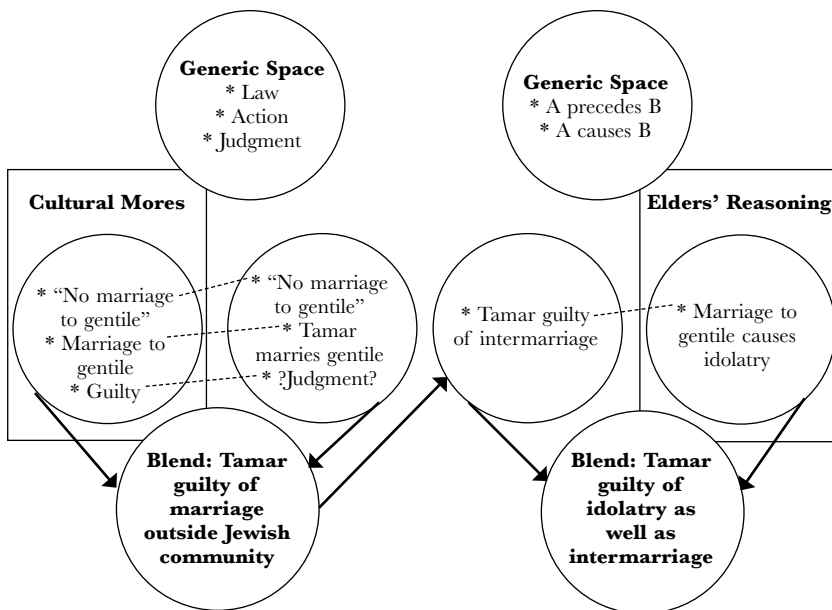
LAB's reader already knows the end of the story. But the story, as told in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, forces the reader to fill in the blanks in a certain way to get there. The framework through which one considers



Biblical Tamar

Tamar's behavior is one where the most significant factor for judging one's behavior is the avoidance of sexual relations with gentiles, not whether one's father-in-law abrogated the marriage laws first.

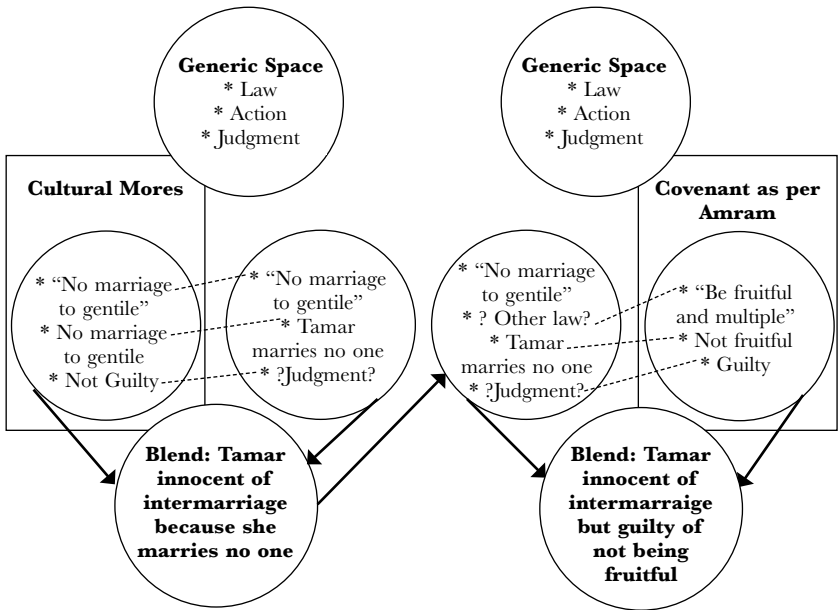
Amram's speech builds a series of counterfactual cognitive blends, each of which employs a complex of cultural understandings and religious laws. In the first blend, Tamar has sex with a gentile instead of Judah. The result of this blend is employed in a new blend that utilizes the causal inferences made by the elders earlier in the chapter. In this space, Tamar (by the reasoning of the elders) is sure to commit or at least cause her children to commit idolatry, as idolatry is the certain outcome of marriage to a gentile.¹¹ (See the diagram, "*LAB's* Tamar: Intermarriage & Idolatry".)



LAB's Tamar: Intermarriage and Idolatry

In the second set of blends, Tamar has sex with no one: not Judah, not a gentile. However reasonable this might seem to a present day reader, it would have been a very bad solution for Pseudo-Philo's

¹¹ Of course, idolatry is not the only issue here: if Tamar has a child by a gentile, then does that child inherit Tamar's first husband's property? She is supposed to have a child fathered by someone who is related to her first husband. A gentile clearly does not fit the bill. Although, of course, it is true that Judah's wife was a Canaanite, so his sons were half-gentile! Pseudo-Philo's Tamar is focused on their Jewishness.

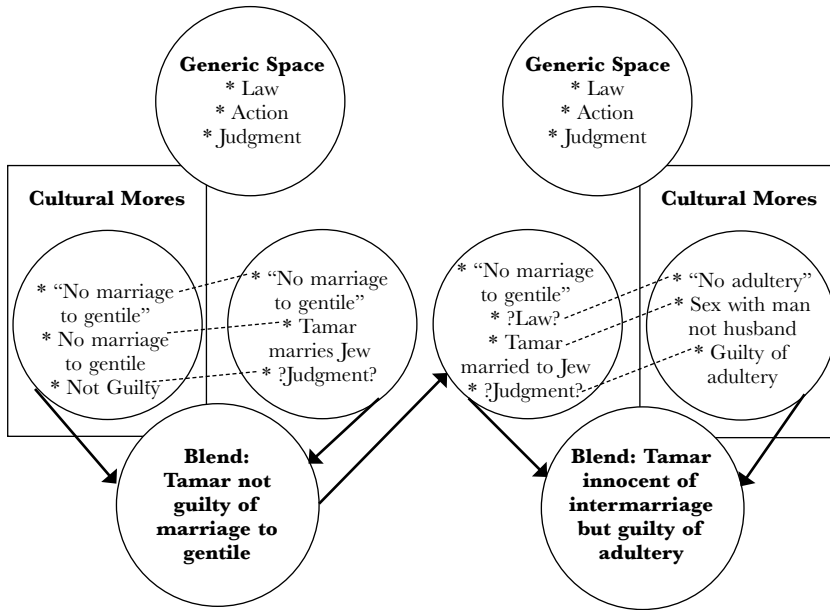


LAB's Tamar: No Intermarriage, No Fruitfulness

audience. Widowed women were to be remarried, not independent. Children had to be given to Tamar's first husband so that his inheritance could be continued. This second set of blends evaluates Tamar's behavior using both the injunction to avoid contact with a gentile, and the command to be fruitful and multiply, which Amram argues is the most important part of the covenant to remember in this situation. Using these two laws, Tamar is innocent of intermarriage but guilty of disobedience to God's law.

Amram's argument is ingenious. He has taken the elders' concern—that their children not be married to gentiles—has silently accepted the compression between marriage to gentiles and idolatry, and he has interjected the conclusion into his assessment of Tamar's behavior. Should Tamar marry a gentile, she would not only be guilty of exogamy but also of idolatry. At the same time, Amram has used the injunction to be fruitful and multiply as an input instead of the elder's concern about idolatry, and shown how Tamar's avoidance of contact with a gentile (or even Judah!) would place her in non-compliance with that law.

There is, of course, one last mental space lurking, and that is the space where Tamar could have had sex with a Jew other than Judah.



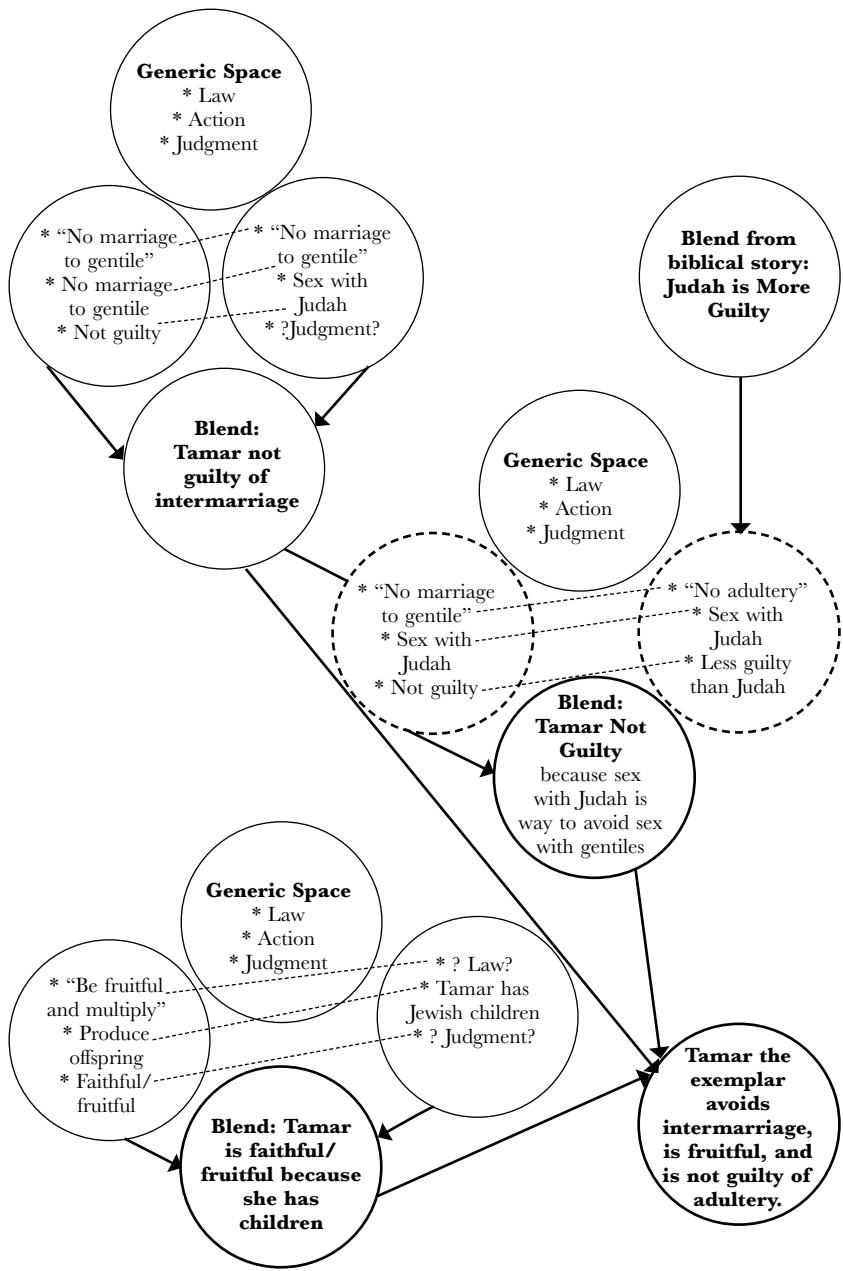
LAB's Tamar Marries a Jew

But because she was affianced to Judah's son, she would have been guilty, again, of adultery. Now her position as "less guilty" than Judah evaporates, because she would not have been getting a child for her first husband from among his own people.

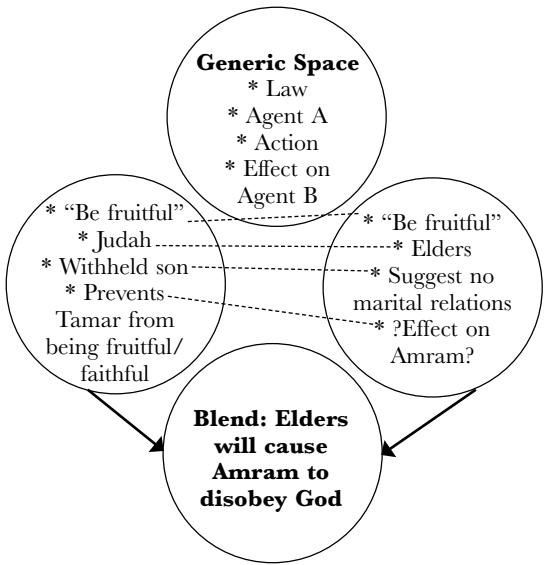
Finally, we look at the blends as Amram applied them to the case. Tamar is not guilty of marriage to a gentile (and hence of idolatry) when she seduces Judah. She has honored the laws regarding levirate marriage in so far as it is possible for her, and is less guilty than Judah of adultery. And finally, Tamar is faithful to the command to be fruitful and multiply. (See diagram, "Amram's Assessment of Tamar.")

Once Amram has established that Tamar was not guilty, even though she did have sex with her father-in-law, and also established that this is true because of her desire to avoid relations with gentiles, the way is cleared for him to apply the blends to himself. The connections between the two stories have been made explicit through the vital relations of analogy (sexual activity, risk of life), property (pregnancy), and similarity (three months hiding).

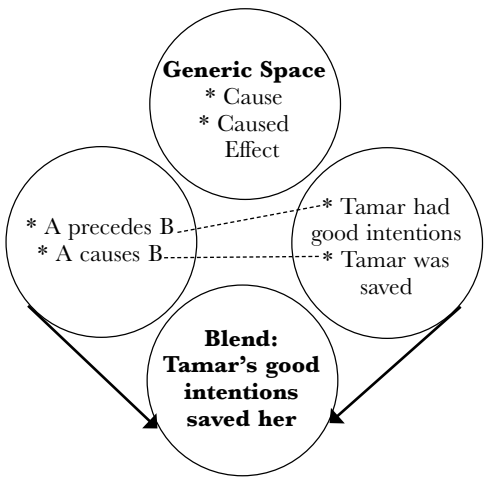
If Tamar is not guilty after sex with her father-in-law, how much less guilty would Amram be after sex with his lawful wife? They are both fulfilling the covenant to multiply; they are both fulfilling the cultural



Amram's Assessment of Tamar



Parallels Between Judah and the Elders



Intention As Cause

call for endogenous marriage; they are both avoiding idolatry; and they are both defying authorities who would refuse them the opportunity to conform to the law. While Amram has been constructing these blends for Tamar, the same blends are being constructed for him. He re-frames the elders' action, in light of Tamar's story, as parallel to Judah's withholding of his son.

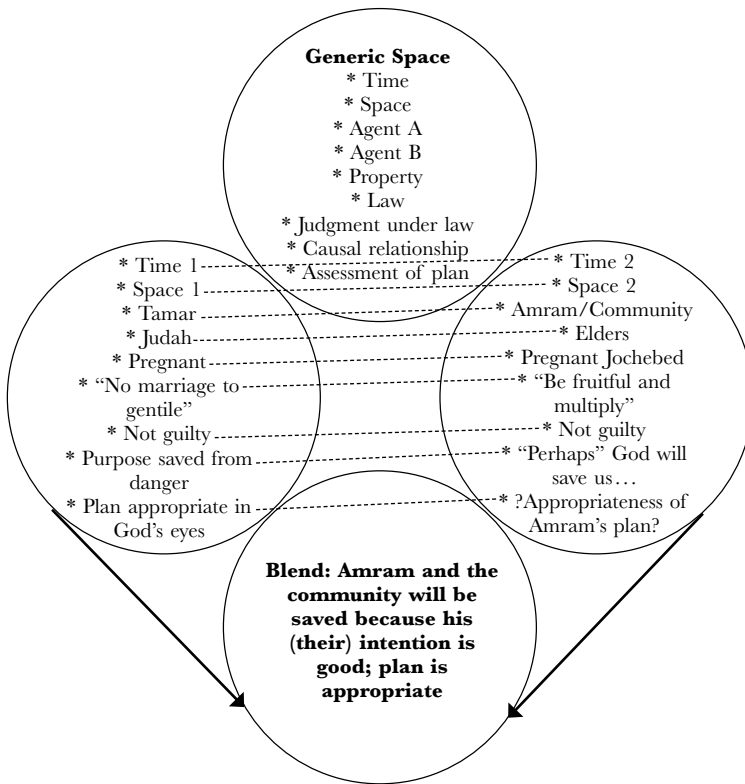
When Amram closes his retelling of Tamar's story, he says, "Her purpose saved her from all danger." Amram has reworked her story in such a way that her intentions become causative for her survival. This is very similar to the cognitive construction that licenses this entire retelling. As I discussed in the first section of this chapter, a reader will unconsciously assume that because Tamar was saved, her behavior was somehow appropriate—her purpose saved her from all danger. This unconscious assumption is what gives her theological and ideological interpretations—as presented by Pseudo-Philo—credence.

6.5 TAMAR PLUS AMRAM

By interjecting the conclusion about Tamar's behavior into the middle of a discussion about whether the Israelite men should be having marital relations with their wives, Amram brings that cognitive blend to bear on his argument. According to Amram, intentions have everything to do with the results here—if one acts out of a desire to preserve the community, then one's children and one's self will live.

While Tamar's stated intent was to avoid relations with gentiles, and "[H]er purpose saved her," Amram does not attempt to make an overt supposition about what will happen if people follow his plan. His statement, "Who knows, perhaps God will act zealously on account of this to free us from our humiliation," leaves the outcome open to conjecture—and to God's will.

But Amram doesn't have to make an overt statement about the results of his plan. The result is specified in the overarching blend between these two stories, because the Tamar input includes her eventual preservation. In this blend, there are numerous vital relations compressions. Time and space are compressed, Amram and Tamar are compressed by analogy, Tamar and Amram's wife Jochebed are compressed through role and property (woman, pregnant), Amram and Tamar's intentionality is compressed, Judah and the elders are compressed, and there is a cause and effect between intention and result, to name a just a few of the connections.



Blending Tamar and Amram

And although Amram does not claim God's approval for his plan, both Tamar's good intentions and her successful ending are included in the final blend, where anyone reading or hearing the story would understand the forcefulness of Amram's argument.

6.6 CONCLUSIONS

The overall effect of the insertion of Tamar's story into this speech by Amram is that the mental spaces evoked by the elders of the community are turned against the elders' own arguments. Amram's recounting of Tamar's words serves to undermine the elders while reinforcing Amram's own contentions. And, in the end, Amram does not need to voice any predictions, but merely relies on the remembered ending of the Tamar story to make his point. Pseudo-Philo succeeds in portraying

this character as faithful even though he is in opposition to the leadership, and might be seen as risking his own son's life. Amram manages to reinforce the need to avoid intermarriage and shun idolatry without risking the ongoing life of the community.

From a theological and ideological point of view, it is important to notice what exactly Pseudo-Philo is choosing to blend into this argument. He consistently argues that fruitfulness is part of being a good Jew, that marriage should be endogamous no matter what, that sexual contact with gentiles results in apostasy, and that God expects Israel to act out its belief in the covenant rather than playing it safe.

This is just one of the many times that Pseudo-Philo chooses to interject a biblical story outside of its normal position. Our examination should make it clear that, at least in this instance, the interjection is not just because there are some interesting similarities between the story interjected and the one into which it is inserted. The inserted story is used to shape a theological and ideological position which is central to Pseudo-Philo's re-telling.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ERROR OR INTENTION? MIXED-UP METAPHORS

A prominent feature of Pseudo-Philo is the revision or even contradiction of common biblical metaphors. Some commentators ascribe the changed metaphors to a faulty translation process or even to Pseudo-Philo's inability to keep her metaphors straight.¹

But just as I have argued that re-telling of biblical stories serves to advance the theological and ideological goals of the author, I would argue that the re-shaping of common biblical metaphors also serves as the author's commentary on appropriate theology and ideology.

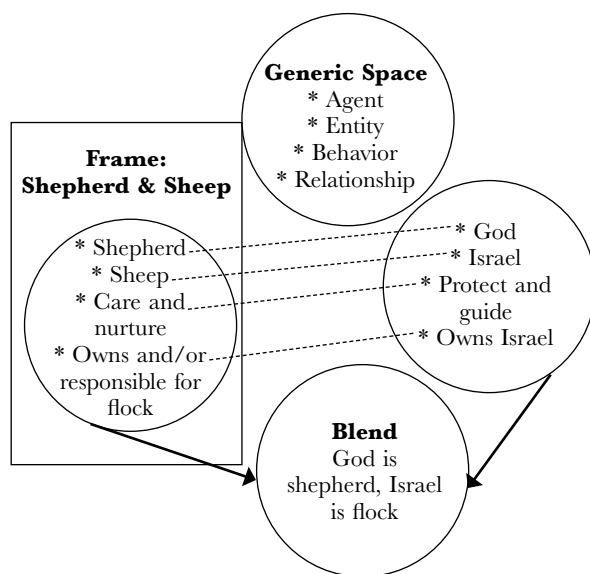
7.1 DEBORAH AND SHEEP

One example of a "re-worked" biblical metaphor occurs in the inaugural speech of Deborah. In Judges 5, Deborah is named as Israel's judge; she summons Barak and sends him to war with no community conference. In *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, Deborah addressed the people immediately after they have confessed their sins against God. In this speech, Deborah takes up a familiar cognitive blend: God is the shepherd and Israel is the flock. This re-worked metaphor serves to establish her both as an informed insider and as a knowledgeable leader able to interpret scripture, while at the same time advancing the idea that Israel, while possessing a loving God, deserves all that happens to it.

Deborah opens her speech by saying,

Si potest occidenda ovis respondere in conspectus occidentis eam, cum et qui occidit et qui occiditur taceat, cum aliquoties constrictetur in eam? (LAB 30.5)

¹ For instance, when Jael uses three flock metaphors where Israel alternates between being the ram, the flock, and the ewe, Jacobson assumes that LAB is "unthinking." (Jacobson, *Commentary*, 852.)



God is Flock, Israel is Sheep

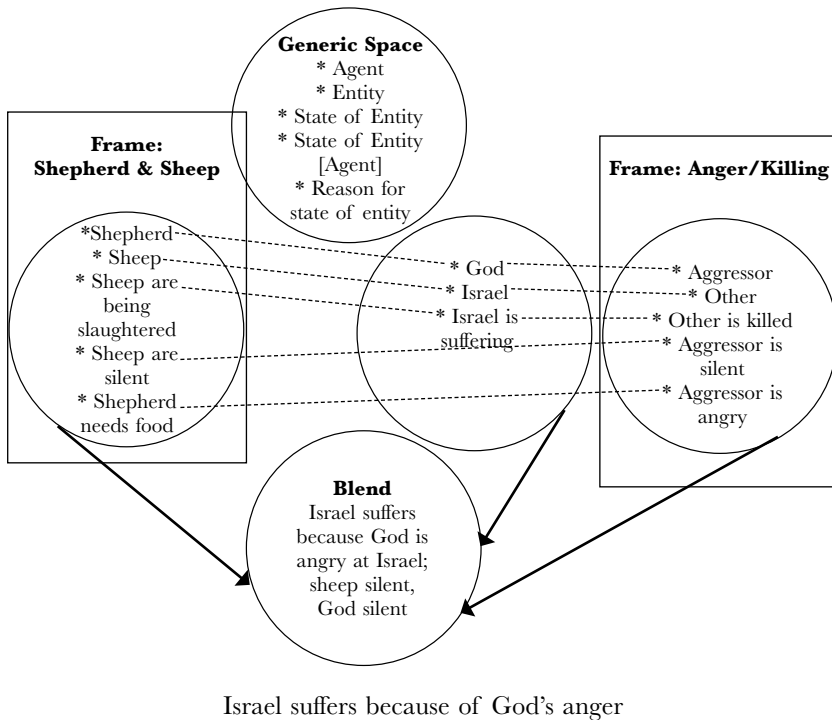
Is the about-to-be-killed sheep able to answer in front of the one killing it when both he who kills and he who is being killed are silent since sometimes he is made very angry² toward it?

The metaphor of God as shepherd and Israel as sheep is a commonplace.

The information about shepherds and sheep employed in this standard metaphor is part of a larger cultural frame that would have been well known to the community that Pseudo-Philo addressed. This larger frame contains material that is not normally referenced in the metaphors for God and Israel—for instance, we don't find the prophets using the annual shearing as a metaphoric trope, nor do we hear anything about rams impregnating ewes, though both of those were important parts of life for both shepherd and sheep. Nor is butchering normally referenced in the God/Israel metaphor.

² Reading with Jacobson, who argues that the verb *contristor* “often goes back to Hebrew verbs that can mean ‘be angry.’” (*Commentary*, 836.) When one considers the overall metaphor, the connections between killing and anger are more compelling than between killing and sorrow, though the latter is by no means impossible.

But Deborah speaks not of sheep being tended, the usual image; rather, the sheep are on the verge of being slaughtered. While the folk understanding of sheep as unaware of danger and silent in the face of death is suggested, the blend also includes the silence and the anger of the shepherd, who is getting ready to slaughter the animal. This shepherd is not caring for the sheep but rather sharpening the knife. Metaphorically, the people are living with the expectation of imminent death because of God's anger. Deborah has re-framed the relationship of the community to God in a way that shows both their vulnerability and God's anger. This revised metaphor brings out the fact that the shepherd has life and death control over the sheep because the sheep can be slaughtered.³



³ While a few biblical passages refer to the slaughter of sheep, none of them accuse God of doing the slaughtering. The closest text would be Psalm 44:11, where God is said to have made Israel like sheep for the slaughter. But the slaughterer is not God but the nations.

In Deborah's cognitive blend, different parts of the sheep/shepherd cultural frame are picked out and combined with new inputs such as cultural knowledge about anger and violence. Anger and violence have a frame of their own, where rage can cause one to take another's life. This frame includes the folk understanding that if angry enough, a person can be rendered speechless.

In the resulting blend, the appropriate (i.e., occasional and motivated by need) killing of the sheep by the shepherd is combined with the facts that rage can cause a person to kill and that Israel is suffering persecution. Death of sheep and death of humans are compressed through the vital relation of similarity, as are human suffering and animal suffering; the shepherd and the killer are also linked through the property of analogy—both are ending life. There is a similarity link between the silence of the sheep and the speechlessness of the angry person, and that quality of silence accrues to both God/shepherd and Israel/sheep in the blend.

This cognitive blend raises yet another question—why is God mad? Deborah goes on to address that issue: she recites a list of the glories that God has performed for Israel. This heaping up of evidence emphasizes the point that God has done many great wonders.⁴ But as the people pointed out themselves earlier, they have forsaken God and sinned. In the face of all these glories, in the face of all the prophet's instructions, the people have refused to obey.

The introduction of Israel's disobedience completes Deborah's blend relating to shepherds and sheep. Returning to the cultural frame of anger, a new facet is emphasized: anger can be engendered by disobedience. Now God's anger, and Israel's slaughter, has a good reason. God is not capricious.

The re-conceptualization of this metaphor accomplishes several cognitive tasks. First, because the original metaphor is culturally commonplace, the reader/listener is engaged with and accepts the metaphor at an unconscious level. It is only as the cognitive blend progresses that the oddness of the blend becomes apparent and conscious.

⁴ The last two in this list of eight are not only marvels, but are specific military situations involving natural phenomena caused by divine intervention. Given that Israel's coming victory under Deborah's leadership will also entail such a miracle, this speech prefigures God's intervention.

Secondly, the cognitive blend provides new insight, new conclusions. When one reads or hears this passage, the questions of anger, justification, and suffering are all addressed. Though the people may feel that they are being slaughtered like sheep, the metaphor provides a reason—however unpalatable—for their suffering, as well as a way to change the situation (i.e., obey). A larger theological principle is invoked, one which is repeated throughout the text.

There is a third effect from this cognitive blend that should also be mentioned. Deborah is presented as an insider because she is able to use a culturally common metaphor. But she also comes off as a knowledgeable leader when she is able to manipulate the metaphor—which is normally a comforting one—into something that explains Israel’s pain and suffering. Her ability to find continuity between promises of care and present distress heighten her stature in the community. And this stature as a knowledgeable leader also “floats up” to Pseudo-Philo herself.

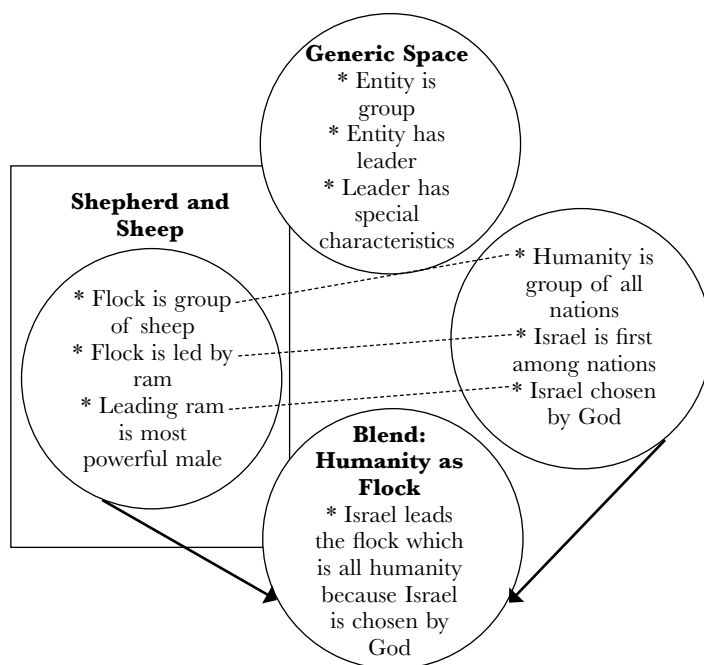
7.2 Jael and Sheep

In the very next chapter of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, the flock metaphor appears again. But in this case again, the depiction of the flock is very different from anything found in the biblical text.

The re-worked metaphors are found in the mouth of Jael, the Kenite woman who slays Sisera. Jael’s story opens when Sisera, fleeing from a losing battle against Israel, arrives at her tent. As in the biblical story, Jael invites Sisera in, extending refuge and food. Pseudo-Philo adds the offer of an escort home in the evening. When Sisera requests a drink, Jael instructs him to sleep while she milks her flock. His request serves as an excuse to go leave the tent, and as she works, she prays to God to remember (*memor*) her. She then launches into a series of metaphors related to the culturally entrenched metaphor, ISRAEL IS GOD’S FLOCK. But Jael’s metaphors begin with a twist on the traditional blend, one where Israel is represented by a single animal from among the sheep, rather than the whole flock.

*Nonne elegisti solum Israel et non assimilasti eum animalibus sisi velut arietem precedentem et ducatorem gregis?*⁵

⁵ LAB 31:5.



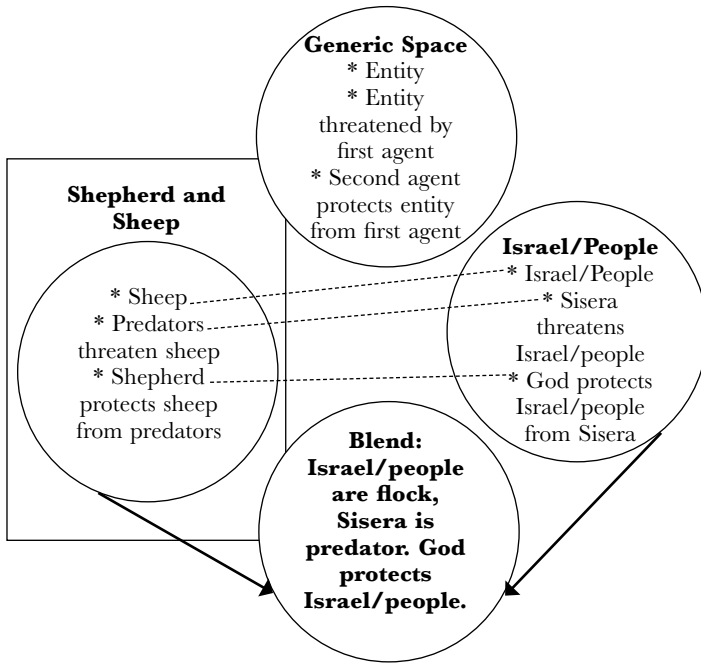
Humanity is Flock, Israel is Ram

Did you not choose Israel alone and did you not liken him to no animal except the ram who goes before and leads the flock?

In Jael's opening metaphor, the flock, *grex*, consists of all people rather than just Israel. While the initial evocation is of the traditional metaphor, with all of its attendant relationships, membership in the flock is quickly expanded. Viewed through the lens of this blend, Jael herself is a member of the "flock".

Jael's second metaphor in 31:5 again involves the use of "flock" as an input to the blend, but with a slightly different connotation. *Sisara cogitavit dicens: Vadam et puniam gregem Fortissimi.* (Sisera made a plan saying: I will go and I will punish the flock of the Most High.)

Flock, in this second metaphor, is used to refer to a group of people who belong to God. How do we understand this "flock", *grex*, placed immediately after the first metaphor that included the nations among the flock? The initial mention encompasses all humanity: should this second metaphor also evoke the nations, or just Israel as is customary in the existing culturally primary blend? Does one follow Jacobson



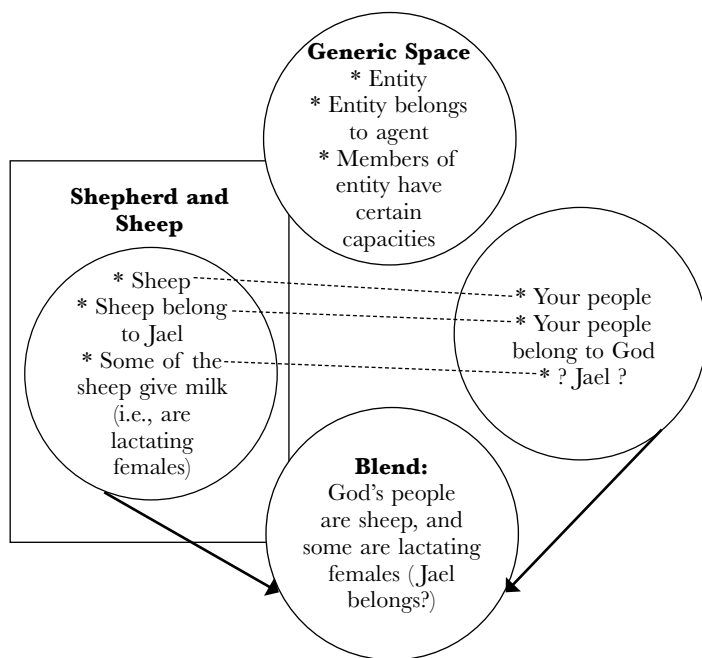
God's Flock is Threatened

when he says, “LAB appears to have unthinkingly reverted to the common metaphor of Israel as God’s flock,”⁶ or does the reader allow the possibility that Pseudo-Philo intended to carry the broader notion of flock-as-all-humanity from the immediately preceding metaphor? Could both meanings possibly be intended? Certainly, one must argue that both meanings are cognitively active, because of the preceding metaphor.

One might argue that only Israel is threatened by Sisera. But earlier in the chapter Sisera plots secretly to carry Jael back to his home, which surely constitutes a threat to Jael.⁷

⁶ Jacobson, *Commentary*, 852.

⁷ See *LAB*, 31:3.



God's People as Lactating Ewes

Before attempting to answer these questions, let us examine the third and final flock metaphor of Jael's speech in *LAB* 31:5: *Ecce ego accipiam de lacte pecorum istorum, quibus assimilasti populum tuum...* (And behold, I will take from the milk of these sheep which you have likened to your people...)

Again, the text speaks of people and sheep, but the lactating ewes are compared to God's chosen ones. The reference to milking reminds the reader that females are not just productive members of the flock, but they are productive specifically because they are female. The highlighting of these female, reproductive qualities of the sheep echoes both the narrator's and Sisera's assessment of Jael's attributes earlier in the chapter.⁸ For the third time, one asks, are we to read this sheep metaphor as referring to Israel, which is its usual sense, or as carrying over the meaning of flock which was established at the beginning of

⁸ Jael is very beautiful, *mulier autem erat bone speciei valde*, says the narrator in verse 3, and Sisera, observing her beauty and the roses she has scattered on her bed, tells himself that if he is saved Jael will be his wife.

the sequence? Is the evocation of female reproductive traits merely coincidence, or is it an attempt by the author to hint at Jael's inclusion within the protected sphere of God's people?

It is clear that one cannot read the three flock metaphors presented by Jael with identical understandings of "flock": in some instances, the nations are included along with Israel in the flock, and sometimes Israel is represented by a (male) ram and at in others, by a (female) lactating ewe. One could assume, with Jacobson, that "LAB's inconsistency is all too clear."⁹ Or one could look at the way these three metaphors blend cognitively with the culturally entrenched metaphor Israel as God's flock to create Jael's multifaceted character.

I would argue that Pseudo-Philo has established, in these three metaphors, a complex conceptual blend, where the first metaphorical statement establishes a mental space that remains in cognitive interplay with the culturally traditional metaphor. Yes, Israel is conventionally the flock of God, and Sisera is clearly at war with the Hebrew people—no other participants are mentioned. However, the first metaphor has established a new understanding of "flock," one in which Jael is included, and that cognitive concept is still active as the next two blends are voiced. Those whom Sisera has threatened to destroy are the chosen of God, and Jael, using the first definition of a flock, is included among that number. Those whom God has selected, in the third blend, are (or include) lactating beasts, and Jael's reproductive capacity has already been noted. It is as if Jael slips in as a member of the flock "Israel" when she is really just a member of the flock "nations." A reader could almost choose to ignore the fact that she's not a Hebrew.

Further proof of Jael's inclusion—however tenuous—among those in relationship to God, is found later at 31:7. Here is another speech that projects ambiguity about God's chosen people. Jael prays that God strengthen her arm—for God's sake, the sake of God's people, and for those who trust in God (*propter te et propter populum tuum et propter eos qui sperant in te*).¹⁰ Here, as in the flock metaphors, one can see both distinction and inclusion between the chosen people Israel and others who might trust in God—namely, Jael herself. One would expect that the people of God, Israel, are those who trust in God. Or are there

⁹ Jacobson, *Commentary*, 852.

¹⁰ Commentators note that this speech begins with a quote from the book of Judith, but it is Pseudo-Philo's particular embellishments under examination here.

people who trust in God who are not among the chosen ones? Again, the language is ambiguous enough to include Jael with the insiders.¹¹

These three metaphors pertaining to flocks establish three successive cognitive spaces; activated in quick succession, they highlight the possibility of Jael's inclusion among the chosen people. By "unpacking" these blends, examining the domains that contribute to them, and the emergent structure resulting from the blends, I have shown that these metaphors need not be read as evidence of faulty translation or poor literary technique. Rather, they result from an attempt to come to grips with the historically positive interpretation of this foreign woman. Pseudo-Philo may want to portray all foreign women as negative, but Jael cannot be shoehorned into that category. So Pseudo-Philo rewrites her story and uses this series of seemingly contradictory metaphors to show both her difference and her inclusion. While Jael is not openly numbered among the chosen, the metaphors which Pseudo-Philo places in her mouth indicate her desire to be closely aligned as well as the ambiguous possibility that she is to be considered among God's chosen ones.

7.3 JEPHTHAH AND THE DOVE

In chapter 4 of this monograph, I have analyzed the running argument between Jephthah and the Israelite elders when Jephthah is being invited to return and lead the troops against the Ammonites. What was not examined in depth was the curious metaphor used in the end of the argument, that of a dove who has lost her children.

In common biblical usage, the dove has several metaphorical meanings. In the Song of Solomon, the dove is metaphoric for the beloved. Hosea compares Ephraim's vacillation between Egypt and Assyria to a dove's simplemindedness. But in other places in the Bible, and in folk usage, the dove is primarily a symbol of grief: both Isaiah and Ezekiel speak of doves moaning.¹²

In chapter 39, verse 5 of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, the people say to Jephthah,

¹¹ And, conversely, do some of the chosen not trust God? Here the stage is being set to show that Jael has more faith than some of the Israelites. Jael trusts (*spero*) in God: the people in Chapter 33 trust in the fathers, which Deborah decries as error.

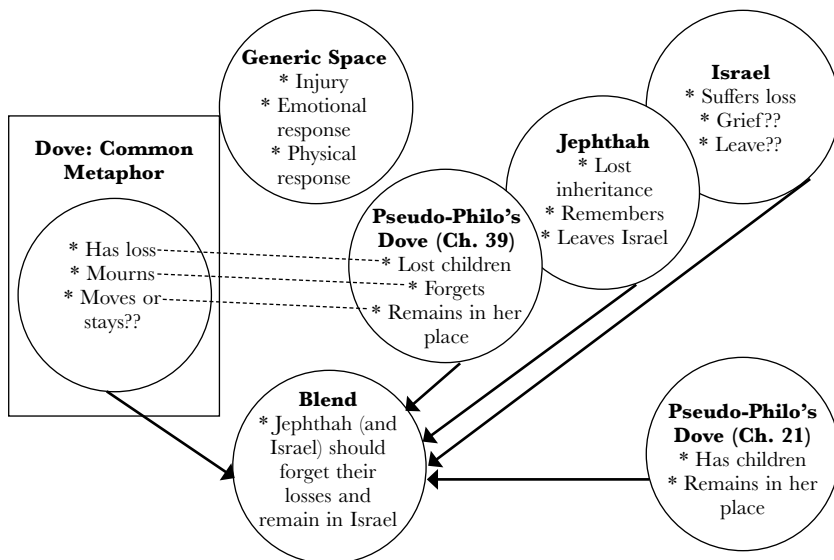
¹² Isaiah 38:14, 59:11 and Ezekiel 7:16.

Edocea te columba cui assimilatus est Israel quia, cum auferuntur ab ea filii eius, tamen de loco non recedit suo, et respuens iniuriam suam obliviscet velut in profundo abyssi.

Let the dove to which Israel has been compared instruct you, because when her young are taken from her, still she does not depart from her place, but she puts away the injury done her and forgets it as if it were in the depths of the deep.

This metaphor raises the question of suffering. While Jephthah (and by extension the audience of Pseudo-Philo) is told to forgive and forget, there is a real wrong done to the dove. Her children have been taken from her. The metaphor is available for use because, in part, Jephthah has also suffered a real loss—his inheritance was taken from him. Likewise, the audience will know that Israel had lost her land to the Roman occupiers, and suffered numerous other grievances such as loss of children.

But while mourning is central to the common metaphor, the emphasis here is the dove's utter forgetfulness of her grievance. Mourning is actively rejected as a response to grievous wrong. Not only is bereavement undesirable, but leaving is also ruled out as an option. Jephthah is expected to return—hence, Israel to stay—in the ancestral place regardless of losses.



The Re-shaped Dove Metaphor

The implication that one is to remain where one belongs is reinforced by the only other metaphoric use of dove in Pseudo-Philo. In 21:6, Joshua speaks with God and tells him that in the future, . . . *assimilabuntur domus Israel columbe fetanti, que collocans filios suos non relinquet nec obliviscetur locum suum*. (. . . [T]he house of Israel will be like a dove who has given birth. She places her young in the nest and does not leave or forget her place. . .)

Both metaphors use the word *obliviscor*; but in chapter 21, the dove is not to forget her place. In chapter 39, she must forget her injury.

One can conclude, when this metaphorical comparison is examined closely, that Pseudo-Philo had a serious commitment to Israel remaining in the land, and had very clear opinions about the way in which that should take place. Israel should not spend its time mourning and moaning but should forget “as if in the depths of the abyss.” Remaining and letting go of losses are appropriate behaviors for the chosen community.

7.4 CONCLUSION

There are two different kinds of results that we can see from the re-shaped metaphors found in Pseudo-Philo. First, the revisions shape the text theologically and ideologically. But they also provide comment upon the characters involved.

In the re-worked metaphor offered by Deborah, the text works to shape the community’s and the reader’s theology to accept suffering as justly deserved and to encourage obedience and return to the law. Deborah’s character also gains prominence when she shows her ability to interpret the present in terms of the past.

At the story level, the revised metaphor of the dove proves sufficient to convince Jephthah he must return to Israel. The metaphor in Jephthah’s story and in 21:6 presents a model for Jephthah, for Israel, and for the reading audience, that they should remain in the land and forget the loss of their children. This also implies that Jephthah’s arguments regarding revenge and holding on to losses are inadequate, and that he—while capable of persuasion—is not a strong or insightful person, a judgment supported by subsequent events.

The metaphorical revisions in Jael’s story do not advance her position in the community of the text or in the reading community. Rather, they serve to moderate her previously positive (biblical) portrait and to

mediate between that affirmative assessment and Pseudo-Philo's strongly negative judgment of foreign women.

In all three cases, the changes in the metaphors move the theology and ideology of the text in a certain direction: toward an acceptance of suffering and grief, toward obedience to the law, toward a commitment to stay in Israel, and away from a positive assessment of foreigners. The changes also support certain views of the individuals described: Deborah is a strongly positive character, Jael an ambiguous character, and Jephthah a weak and shallow character.

CHAPTER EIGHT

QUOTATIONS, CHARACTER, AND AUTHORITY

8.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapters dealing with narrative and rhetorical criticisms, I have analyzed at length the phenomena of quotation, allusion and commendation. In this section, I would like to re-cap these earlier findings, and point out how these conceptual blends characterize the stories of Israel's leaders throughout Pseudo-Philo.

The section on **Prophetic Speech** in Chapter 3 shows how a character accrues authority when that character quotes a known authority figure, especially when that authority figure's speech is a prophecy. Cognitive compression occurs between God and the prophet, and between the prophet and the character quoting the prophet. In the example shown in this section, I will argue that Deborah's reference to the prophets Moses, Joshua, Zebul, and Kenaz compounds their respective reputations to her and her statements. In addition, since each of these prophets reported, at times, the direction they received from God, Deborah's reference brings into play the "eyewitness" scenario which heightens her legitimacy as a speaker.

In Chapter 4, I explored how **Allusions** in a speech position a character as a community "insider". When one alludes to a founding story, one is recognized as knowledgeable about the community and therefore able to speak with authority about the concerns of the community. Every time one of Pseudo-Philo's characters references the covenant or some other biblical trope, the character gains status with both the community in the text and the community reading the text.

Finally, an important part of identifying a good leader are the comments made about that character by other characters in the text, especially by the character of the narrator and the character God. As I pointed out in Chapter 3 in the section **Confirmation and Mirroring** such mirroring or a comment that repeats the substance of a comment previously made by a given character reinforces that character's position because it reactivates the same cognitive path. In addition, in the section on characterization, I argued that God's comments provide the most reliable input to the blend which constitutes a

person's moral character, because God is portrayed as reliable by the text, and because the cultural frames of Pseudo-Philo's readers would accord God ultimate—and intimate—knowledge of humanity.

Given these three general tropes for establishing the authority and stature of a given biblical actor, it seems important to look at personages whom we know carried great influence in the Israelite community—Abraham, Moses and Joshua—and to consider whether Pseudo-Philo's portraits of these three contain quotation, allusion, and confirmation. Once that question is answered, we can examine whether these conceptual blends are also found in the stories of other leaders whose stories have been expanded positively by Pseudo-Philo: Amram, Kenaz, and Deborah. I will also review how *LAB* presents Miriam, Jael, Seila, Elumah, and Hannah, positive figures whose actions are centered, at least initially, in the private sphere. Finally, one can ask whether the figures whom Pseudo-Philo regards neutrally or negatively, such as Jephthah, Gideon, Dedilah, and Micah, contain these same figures.

8.2 ABRAHAM, MOSES, AND JOSHUA

8.2.1 *Abraham*¹

The story of **Abraham**—according to Pseudo-Philo—is scattered throughout the book of *LAB*. He is first mentioned in 4:11, where his birth, his blamelessness, and his covenant with God are prophesied by his great grandmother. But nowhere in the multiple references to Abraham does he ever quote another prophet. This, however, is absolutely sensible within the context of Pseudo-Philo—there WAS no prophet before Abraham.²

Abraham only has one speech in *LAB*, which begins at 6:9. Here, Abraham refuses to escape from prison to avoid being cast into a fiery pit. He chooses instead to rely on the will of God. Here he echoes parts of God's proclamation after the flood at 3:9, where God declares that the people will be judged by famine, sword, fire, pestilence, earthquakes, and scattering, but never again by water. Abraham's statement in 6:11 also

¹ For the sake of convenience, this section employs the name "Abraham," although Pseudo-Philo does maintain the convention of calling him Abram prior to the covenant at 8:3.

² This also makes sense within the context of the Bible.

echoes Ezekiel 33:24–29, which begins with a reference to Abraham.³ Neither of these is a direct quote, but both serve as allusions—as does the overall story in Chapter 6 of the fiery furnace, which echoes the trial of Daniel—to show that Abraham knows God’s general theology and that his life and work prefigures that of the prophets. Abraham is established not just as an insider, but as THE insider, the one who knows God’s foundational attitude and is also able to anticipate the words and deeds of future leaders.

The conceptual blend for these references is quite straightforward and resembles the blends shown in the section on allusion. We should not be confused by the fact that Abraham predates the prophets: for Pseudo-Philo’s readers, the biblical Abraham may precede the prophets but when *LAB*’s Abraham uses prophetic terminology, he is still credited with allusion, because *LAB*’s Abraham is being read at a time that postdates the prophets. It is impossible to disregard the reference once the reference is part of the cultural consciousness, regardless of whether it “makes sense” that Abraham could allude to a prophecy.

I will examine more closely how the conceptual blend works in this reference by comparing the points of contact. Below is Abraham’s speech from 6:11, followed by an English translation of Chapter 33:24–29 of Ezekiel. Trying to sort out a comparison between the Hebrew of Ezekiel and the no longer extant Hebrew of Pseudo-Philo is impossible and only leaves us with a “best guess.” But for the purpose of establishing allusion, it is sufficient to note that the speech of Abraham makes use of the same conceptual blends. The phrases used in Ezekiel establish three mental pictures: people being devoured by wild beasts, the mountains as a place where no one can live, and inescapable death as the punishment for one’s sins. The citations are far from identical; but the mental images called up are very similar.

Respondit Abram et dixit: Ecce ego fugio hodie in montana et, si evasero ignem, exient de montibus fere bestie et comedent nos, aut esce nobis deficient et moriemur fame, et inveniuntur fugientes ante populum terre, cadentes in peccatis nostris. Et nunc vivit in quo confido, quia non movebor de loco meo in quo posuerunt me. Et si fuerit aliquod peccatum meum ut consumens consumar, fiat voluntas Dei. (LAB 6:11)

³ References to the futility of fleeing from God occur in many places throughout the Hebrew scriptures, such as Psalm 139, and both Jeremiah and Ezekiel revel in reminding the faithless that they will perish one way or another—if not by the sword, then by famine or pestilence.

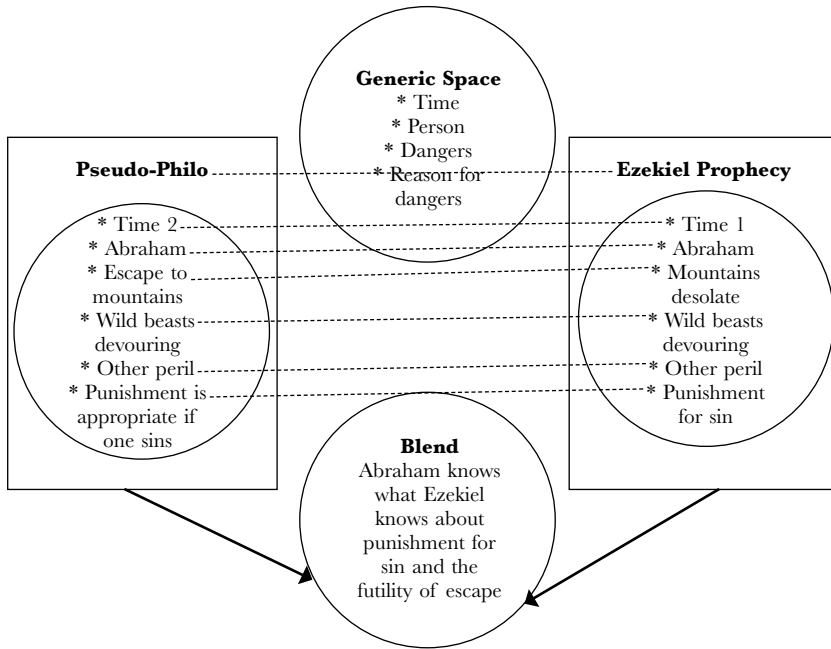
Abraham answered and said, “Behold, today I flee to the mountains. If I have escaped the fire, wild beasts will come forth from the mountains and devour us; or we will lack food and die of famine. We will be found to have escaped the people of the land, but to have fallen because of our sins. And now, as surely as God in whom I trust lives, I will not move from my place where they have put me. If there be any sin of mine such that I should be burned, let the will of God be done.

(The word of the LORD came to me: Mortal, the inhabitants of these waste places in the land of Israel keep saying,) “Abraham was only one man, yet he got possession of the land; but we are many: the land is surely given us to possess.” Therefore say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: You eat flesh with the blood, and lift up your eyes to your idols, and shed blood; shall you then possess the land? You depend on your swords, you commit abominations, and each of you defiles his neighbor’s wife; shall you then possess the land? Say this to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: as I live, surely those who are in the waste places shall fall by the sword; and those who are in the open field I will give to the wild animals to be devoured; and those who are in strongholds and in caves shall die by pestilence. I will make the land a desolation and a waste, and its proud might shall come to an end; and the mountains of Israel shall be so desolate that no one will pass through. Then they shall know that I am the LORD, when I have made the land a desolation and a waste because of all their abominations that they have committed. (Ezekiel 33:24–29)⁴

The connections between these two texts have more to do with mental schemas than with direct quotes. In both cases, Abraham is “present” cognitively: in Pseudo-Philo, he speaks for himself, and in Ezekiel, he is evoked by sinners as the reason why they are guaranteed possession of the land. Also cognitively “present” are mountains, wild beasts who eat humans, no place to hide from death and the idea that sin should and will be punished by God, regardless of one’s status.

In the conceptual blending that lies behind the following diagram, the reader ignores the fact that these remarks occurred at different times, and even the fact that Abraham is referencing someone who came after him. When Time 1 and Time 2 are compressed in this manner, one does not notice the impossibility of the situation. The reader merely registers the similarity, which makes the argument of Pseudo-Philo seem that much more reasonable.

⁴ Translation: Revised Standard Version.



Blending the Ezekiel reference with Abraham's speech

As in the case with any conceptual blend, if the stretch is too wide—if there is too much mental distance between the inputs—the reader will reject the blend. But it seems reasonable to assume that in Pseudo-Philo's cultural milieu, where people were steeped in the biblical text, these phrases would recall biblical authority.

An additional interesting aspect of this quotation is that, in attributing to Abraham a theology that was actually voiced by a prophet, the author inscribes additional authority to the theology. The theology that underlines this passage—"When bad things happen to good people, they must deserve them"—is rife throughout the text of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. Putting it into Abraham's mouth increases its consequence.

In addition to Abraham's multiple allusions to God, there are many speeches made by God about Abraham. In 7:4, God talks about his preference for Abram, how he will be given a land chosen by God and spared from the flood, and how God will establish a covenant with Abraham and his descendants. In 18:5, God treats Balaam to a long diatribe about how he chose Abraham and revealed all to him.

In 23:4, Joshua instructs the people by recounting salvation history as God has instructed him, and Abraham's belief in God, faithfulness, and election form a good portion of the text. Deborah also references Abraham's selection and loyalty, and states that God will remember Abraham's descendants forever.

God's statements about Abraham are uniformly positive throughout the text. Whether God is speaking directly or to another leader such as Joshua or Deborah, it is clear that the portrait of Abraham is intended to be positive.⁵

Cognitively, these positive statements provide input to the blend "Abraham's character" and serve to establish Abraham as the exemplary forefather.

8.2.2 *Moses*

The first mention of **Moses** in Pseudo-Philo comes, in 9:7, from the mouth of God. Amram, the father of Moses, has pleased God, and God declares that Amram's son will serve God forever, will be a conduit for God's wonders and works, will be lighted with the light of God, will see God's house and be privy to God's majesty, statutes, and judgments, and that Moses was anticipated from of old. Just in case anyone misses Moses' importance, God also sends a vision to Miriam reporting that God will work signs through her brother, that Moses will save the people and be their leader. There is not much room to question the character of Moses; these two comments serve to underscore his position as pre-eminent patriarch.

Like Abraham, Moses quotes no prophets; instead, he quotes God. Moses is in direct communication with God throughout his entire career, and takes no steps that are not the result of God's instructions. In these quotations, the "eyewitness" blend is at work overtly as well as covertly.

God gives Moses specific directives about many things; however, Moses' communication is singularly one-note. Of the five times he

⁵ Hence the deletion of things which might not support this assessment. In *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, Abraham has no interest in the heavens or other esoteric knowledge as found in other extra-biblical literature. It is also interesting to note that Pseudo-Philo re-works the intertestamental theme that the angels were jealous of Adam and instead points the angel's jealousy toward Abraham. This serves both to elevate Abraham's stature historically and to provide a reason for God's instruction to sacrifice Isaac.

addresses God, four are requests for God to be merciful.⁶ Moses repeatedly reminds God that sinful human nature is the result of God's plan, and that God must show mercy or the people will be unprotected and insecure (and God's reputation will suffer).

Conceptually, the quotations of God serve to blend God's authority with Moses' authority and heighten his stature in the community. The quotations also show that Moses has direct access to God and is able to address God whenever he so chooses. Not only is Moses able to address God, Moses is able to influence God. On each of the occasions where Moses begs God to remember his people and show mercy—the crossing of the Red Sea, the apostasy of the golden calf, the disbelief in God's promises engendered by the spies' reports, and Moses' testament—God relents and does not destroy Israel.

Until Moses is getting ready to ascend the mountain to die, he says nothing to the people and takes no action that does not come directly from God. Pseudo-Philo makes it very clear that Moses is merely a conduit for God, transmitting not his own but God's words. The only exception occurs in Moses' farewell speech. Given before Moses ascends the mountain to die, it is a reminder of the people's propensity to sin and of how hard Moses worked on their behalf.

The only character that Moses quotes besides God is himself: Deuteronomy 30 appears to be the source of *hodie testor vobis celum ut terram* at 19:4.⁷

As portrayed by Pseudo-Philo, both Moses and Abraham have their character established by a prediction from a female relative and by an announcement from God to the world in general that the man in question is pleasing to him. God speaks to Abraham, but Abraham does not address God; Moses both listens to and tells God things, and has the power to abate God's temper. Abraham may allude to the prophets; Moses only alludes to his own biblical story. For both of these characters, God's opinion as reported by Pseudo-Philo is the primary way that their stature and authority are affirmed for the community. Quotation of or allusion to other prophets is not generally part of the establishment of their authority; they are affirmed directly by God.⁸

⁶ The fifth time Moses speaks to God he asks for a sneak preview of the scope of time 10:4, 12:8–9, 15:7, and 19:8–9. (19:14).

⁷ As Jacobson points out in *Commentary*, 617.

⁸ One can safely assume that the reputations of Abraham and Moses were secure in the community.

8.2.3 *Joshua*

Joshua presents a slightly different picture than Abraham and Moses. Examination of his portrayal in Pseudo-Philo could take a book; but it should suffice for our purposes to mention that his leadership has been prophesied by Eldad and Medad in 20:5, he speaks to (e.g., 21:2–6), quotes (e.g., 21:9), and is spoken to by God (e.g., 20:2); he quotes Moses; he alludes to the covenant (in his extensive covenant speech in Chapter 23) and to the prophet Isaiah.⁹ In these ways he is established as an insider; he accrues the authority of Moses and God; his character is affirmed by God's assessment of him as the appropriate leader for the people after Moses and by the prophets' prediction of his leadership and Moses' affirmation of that prophecy.

8.3 AMRAM, KENAZ, AND DEBORAH

The characters of **Amram, Kenaz, and Deborah** are considerably more fleshed out in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* than in the biblical text. In the biblical text, Amram does not appear in the story of the birth of Moses; he is mentioned in Exodus 6 as the son of Kohath and the father of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam but is otherwise quite invisible. Kenaz is mentioned as Caleb's younger brother and the father of Othniel, a judge, but merits no other references. Deborah, of course, is a judge and prophetess in Judges 4, but she speaks only once, with Barak, and then delivers a long hymn of victory. There is no reference to her call, no inaugural address or admonishment of the community, no comment on her character, no salvation history recapitulation, no last testament, no claim to be a mother to Israel, and no 70 days of mourning. All these are found in Pseudo-Philo.

In *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, all three of these characters are portrayed as leaders in the sense that the three tropes mentioned above—quotation of prophets and God, allusion to insider information, and mirroring or assessment of character—are part of their story.

8.3.1 *Amram*

Pseudo-Philo's **Amram** quotes from Abraham and Tamar; Amram makes allusions to the covenant; and while Amram does not speak

⁹ As Fisk point out (*No Longer Be Silent*, 296), Joshua's testament at 24:2–3 echoes Isaiah 51:1–2.

directly with God, God and the narrator both speak positively about Amram.

Amram's allusions and quotes are addressed in Chapter Six, where I explored the ways that Pseudo-Philo interjects a biblical story out of one context into another. This section, therefore, will only examine God's and the narrator's comments on Amram found in 9:7–8.

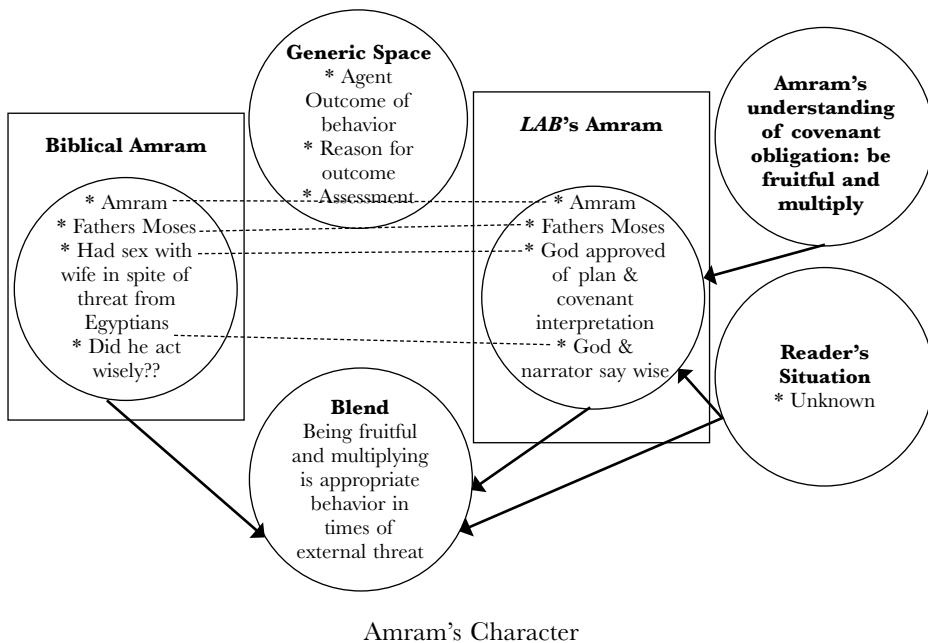
The narrator begins by stating, *Placuit verbum ante conspectum Dei quod cogitavit Amram*. (The plan that Amram contemplated was pleasing to God.) Having delivered that assessment, the narrator lets God speak.

Most of God's speech is about Moses, because Moses is Amram's reward for his faithfulness. God begins by saying,

... *Eo quo placuit ante conspectum meum cogitatione Amre, et non dissipavit testamentum meum inter me et patres eius dispositum, et ideo ecce nunc quod genitum fuerit ex eo mihi serviet in eternum...*

...because Amram's plan has pleased me, and he has not put aside the covenant established between me and his fathers, behold therefore now he who will be born from him will serve me forever...

When this speech is examined conceptually, it becomes clear that Pseudo-Philo's theology is at work underneath it. Moses is not Amram's son just by chance; he is born as a reward for Amram's perspicacious



understanding of God's will and for his adherence to the covenant. Because God has referenced the covenant, we should notice that the particular aspect of covenant held up by Amram—and affirmed by God—is the directive to be fruitful and multiply—even in times of external threat.

The upshot of these comments by God and the narrator are not merely the affirmation of Amram as a good person who understands covenant and makes pleasing plans. Both consciously and unconsciously, the reader learns that Moses' birth and life are rewards for Amram, and that Amram's understanding of the covenant is right. The reader discovers that good things happen to good people for a reason, and that it is important to attend to the command to be fruitful and multiply.

8.3.2 *Kenaz*

The chapters in Pseudo-Philo devoted to **Kenaz** use these same cognitive devices to present Kenaz as a leader. When Kenaz is installed as the next judge after Joshua, he begins his leadership by preaching quotations from Moses and Joshua to the tribes. There are numerous allusions present in *LAB* 25 through 28. For instance, like Joshua 7, bad luck in war results from impurity in the community, and Kenaz casts lots to determine who has sinned; the sinners, along with their possessions and families, are burned in a *wadi*. Later in Chapter 27, Kenaz's single-handed victory is modeled on Gideon's story in Judges 7.

While God oversees the appointment of Kenaz as leader, and speaks regularly with Kenaz, nowhere in the text does God comment upon Kenaz or his behavior. Nor does the narrator comment upon Kenaz. However, mirroring does occur regularly. In Chapter 25, God tells Kenaz what to do in order to identify the sinners: Kenaz performs the action and the sinners are identified. God tells Kenaz to put the stones in the ark at 26:12; Kenaz does so at 26:15. In Chapter 27, Kenaz asks God for a specific sign that the Amorites will be defeated; God gives Kenaz that sign.

Like Moses, Kenaz converses directly with God. Unlike any other positively portrayed character in *LAB* however, Kenaz tests God. He is not punished when he chooses to see if he himself can destroy the sacred stones and books.

Et post hec volens Cenez experiri si comburerentur lapides igni, misit eos in ignem. Et factum est, mox ut cadebant in ignem, exstinguebatur ignis. Et accipiens Cenez ferrum ut frangerentur, et cum tetigisset eos gladius, solvebatur ferrum eius. Et post hec, volens

vel libros delere per aquam, factum est ut decidens super eos aqua stringeretur in se. Et videns hec dixit Cenez: Benedictus Deus qui fecit tantas virtutes in filios hominum, et fecit protoplastum Adam, et ostendit ei omnia ut, cum peccasset in ipsis, Adam tunc hec universa abnegaret ne ostendens hec generi hominum dominarentur eis. (LAB 26:6)

After this Kenaz wished to test whether the stones would be consumed by fire, and he cast them into the fire. As soon as they fell into the fire, the fire was extinguished. Kenaz took the iron sword in order to break them. When the sword touched them, its iron melted. After this, he wished at least to erase the books with water, but as soon as the water fell upon them it congealed. When he saw this, Kenaz said, "Blessed be God, who has done such great wonders for the sons of men, and he made Adam the first-fashioned one and showed him everything on condition that when Adam sinned thereby, he would deny the human race all he had shown, lest these things gain control over them."

Murphy claims, "Kenaz does not test God or distrust the divine word, but rather confirms it."¹⁰ Jacobson argues that the underlying motivation of Kenaz is the same as the apostates who were just burned. He says, "I suspect that LAB did not take such behavior on Cenez' part as sinful because he saw it as similar to that of another judge. Indeed, it may be fair to say that LAB probably loosely modeled this event on the life of Gideon..."¹¹ Erich Gruen sees this as one in a series of doubts presented by LAB's characters and argues that "Pseudo-Philo was obviously not presenting a man of unfailing faith," in this portrayal of Kenaz.¹²

I find none of these explanations of Kenaz' behavior convincing. Contra Murphy, one cannot deny that Kenaz' actions tested God's claims. Nor should one assume, with Jacobson, that though similar to the sinner's actions, this event should be viewed positively because it resembles the story of Gideon. There are differences between the sinners' and Kenaz' actions that are significant. And Pseudo-Philo does not view Gideon as an exemplar, so modeling after him would not necessarily yield a positive effect.¹³ Finally, in the cases that Gruen references as examples of doubt throughout Pseudo-Philo, other characters ask for signs from God in order to know what they should do.

¹⁰ Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo*, 123.

¹¹ Jacobson, *Commentary*, 765.

¹² This fits into his overall reading of Pseudo-Philo as a nuanced and dialogic text. Erich Gruen, "Subversive Elements in Pseudo-Philo," 46.

¹³ Nor, as Gruen notes, is the similarity to Gideon particularly striking. Gideon asks for signs repeatedly; Kenaz asks for none in this scene.

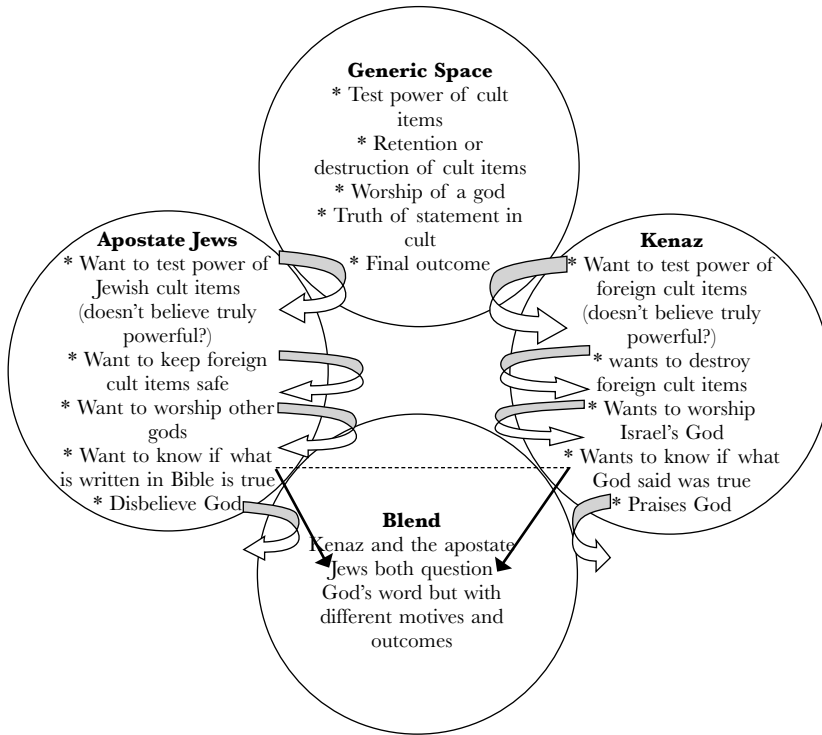
But Kenaz does not ask for a sign regarding the destruction of the stones and books.¹⁴

I would argue that no one has yet read this scene closely or correctly. Yes, there are definite and unmistakable links to the sins of the apostate Jews in the previous chapter, the most obvious being that “Kenaz wished to test [certain things]...” (*[V]olens Cenez experiri...*) The sinners also wished (*volens*) to investigate certain things. But while several groups of reprobates tested Israelite religious objects to see if they were holy, and others tested foreign cult items to see if they were efficacious, none of the condemned sinners tested the foreign cult items with the intent to destroy them. Their destructive urges were only aimed at Israel’s God. I would argue that for Kenaz, his tests were an attempt to annihilate these blasphemous religious items, not to establish how well they worked; and therein lays the difference between him and the sinners.

The only real similarity between the apostates and Kenaz is the questioning of God’s word. Kenaz could not accept that these dangerous items were indestructible; the apostates could not accept that God actually cared about their behavior. However, these positions are not identical. One involves questioning the power of foreign gods, while the other involves questioning the power of one’s own God. Kenaz, when defeated, sees his defeat as God’s victory. The foreign items are indeed mighty, stronger than a human being, but not more potent than Israel’s God. But for the people, questioning God’s word does not result in increased faith in God but in disbelief and secretiveness.

What is interesting about a cognitive comparison of these actions is that while Kenaz and the sinners have many points of contact—they are linked through the vital relations of similarity (possession of cult items), analogy (testing of items) and so on—the points of disanalogy are greater. The cult items belong to different cults; the purpose is destruction versus preservation; the result is praise of God versus disbelief. The structure of the story is designed to juxtapose Kenaz’ actions with those of the blasphemers. At virtually every point, he chooses a different path. And on the one point where they exhibit the same behavior—in the questioning of God—the purposes behind that behavior separate them. As Amram opines in 9:5 regarding Tamar, “[H]er purpose saved her from all danger.” In this case, Kenaz’s purpose—to destroy foreign cult items—saved him from all danger.

¹⁴ While I agree with Gruen that *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is a dialogic and complex text, I don’t think this particular vignette fits well into his theory.



Kenaz and the Sinners Compared: Points of Contact and Disanalogy

What the reader also learns from this adventure is that while foreigner's cult items are powerful, Israel's God is more powerful. The reader also learns that Kenaz' relationship with God is a clear and accurate one; what he hears from God is true. On this point, Kenaz gains stature as a leader.

8.3.3 *Deborah*

The story of Deborah also employs the cognitive devices mentioned above. Deborah's opening argument contains reference to Moses, Joshua, Kenaz, and Zebul, all prophets and authorities by Pseudo-Philo's light. Her prophetic quotation is analyzed in Chapter 3 in the subdivision **Direct Speech** and will not be repeated here.

Deborah's speeches in Chapters 30–33 do more than draw on the power of her predecessors, however. She also shows her ability to tell and to interpret the story in a new and productive ways. In her initial exhortation to the community she re-works two common biblical metaphors

for the relationship between God and the people, establishing herself as an insider as well as a leader qualified to interpret scripture. The “Song of Deborah”—which in the biblical text is a catalogue of tribal responses to war—becomes a parade of salvation history in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, chock full of allusions to the testing of Abraham, the sacrifice of Isaac, the escape from Egypt, the giving of the law, and the conquering of the land.

In Chapters 30 through 33, the narrator never provides an assessment of Deborah; nor does God assess her character. Until the final verse of Chapter 33, no one comments upon her: it is here, as she is dying, that the people finally remark upon her significance to Israel. The author of *LAB* instead appraises Deborah by placing her predictions in relationship to other’s actions; reliability is proven when prophecy is fulfilled.

In 31:1, after Deborah instructs Barak to go to war, she prophesies Sisera’s ultimate fate. In the first half of her prediction, she repeats a bragging three-part quote from Sisera; in the second half, she quotes God’s response that addresses each of Sisera’s three boasts. Deborah reports these words as if she were able to read the minds of both. The rest of Chapter 31 underscores Deborah’s reliability as a prophet as Sisera falls exactly as Deborah reported.

The only direct comments about Deborah come from the people during her last testament. When Deborah says, *Obaudite mihi quasi matri vestre* (heed me like your mother) at 33:1, and the people call her “mother” and refer to themselves as “your children” in 33:4, they confirm the accuracy of Deborah’s self-assessment. Cognitively, the repetition serves to reinforce not only Deborah’s authority over the community, but it also reinforces the idea that a mother has authority.¹⁵

8.3.4 Summary: Amram, Kenaz, and Deborah

It is clear from this examination that the stories of Amram, Kenaz, and Deborah each contain the cognitive blends that underlie the phenomena of quotation, allusion, and commentary/mirroring. These cognitive moves help establish them as authorities for the community within the text as well as for *LAB*’s readers.

¹⁵ I will explore the implications of this later. But it is worth noting that this same description is used later, in another biblical insertion at 38:2, when 7 men resist sacrificing to Baal. When pressed by Jair, they quote *Debbora mater nostra* (Deborah our mother).

8.4 MIRIAM, Jael, Seila, Elumah, and Hannah

Let us now consider whether these same mental constructions are present in the vignettes of five women who are viewed positively, but whose sphere of action is primarily or substantially within the home.

8.4.1 *Miriam*

Miriam, the sister of Moses, plays a bit part in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. Gone is the biblical song after the crossing of the sea; gone too is the story of her rebellion against Moses and punishment by God. While Miriam's characterization in the biblical texts is ambiguous, her portrait in Pseudo-Philo is positive, though small.

At 9:10, in the midst of the story of the conception and birth of Moses, the narrator relates that Miriam had a vision, which she reported to her parents. The dream predicts that Moses will be cast into water and dry up water, work signs, save the people, and exercise leadership forever. Miriam receives this prophecy from a man wrapped in linen, who tells her exactly what to say to her parents. Miriam repeats his words verbatim, but *non crediderunt ei parentes eius*. (Her parents did not believe her.)¹⁶

Miriam does not quote a prophet to her parents. However she does quote a messenger of God, alluding to the entirety of Moses' life, including his timeless position as pre-eminent prophet of Israel. Her allusions do not expand upon the story but do serve to make connections between seemingly unrelated scenes in the life story of Moses.¹⁷

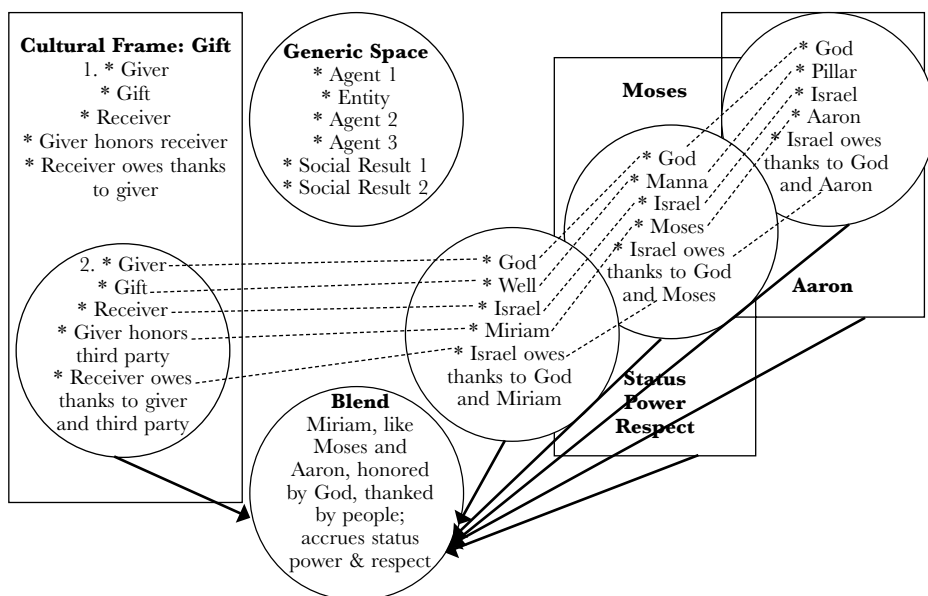
While God does not comment upon Miriam's character, the narrator tells us something about the people's relationship with her, and God's appreciation of that relationship. At 20:8, we are told that

Et hec sunt tria que dedit populo suo Desu propter tres homines, id est, puteum aque mirre pro Maria et columnam nubis pro Aaron et manna pro Moyse. Et finitis his tribus ablata sunt hec tria ab illis.

These are the three things that God gave to his people on account of three persons: that is, the well of the water of Marah for Miriam and

¹⁶ As I will point out in Chapter 9, disbelief is a negative reaction in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. In this case, it involves not just disbelief of Miriam but also disbelief of God. Amram consequently has no answer for the taunts of the elders.

¹⁷ Being cast into the water of the river serves as a portent for Moses' actions at the Reed Sea.



Blend: Miriam's character as implied by Pseudo-Philo

the pillar of cloud for Aaron and the manna for Moses. And after these three died, these three things were taken away from them.

This is not a direct assessment of Miriam's character; the narrator is not commenting upon something that she said or did, nor is the narrator mirroring Miriam. But because the statement allows us to draw conclusions about how God viewed Miriam, it provides an answer to the question, "How did Pseudo-Philo regard her?" The conceptual analysis shows that the author equates Miriam with her brothers in terms of her value to the community.

One of the inputs to the conceptual blend here is the cultural frame of "gift." This frame includes not only the idea of one party bestowing something on a second party, but the concept that a gift can be given by one party to another in honor of a third party.¹⁸

Not only does the conceptual blend bring in the cultural frame of gift giving, and the honor that is due to Miriam when a gift has been

¹⁸ Similar, for instance, to the way that one donates money to a university in honor of some other person.

given on her account, but the pairing of Miriam's situation with that of Moses and Aaron brings into play the cultural frames that accompany them: status, power, and respect.

Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum's portrait of Miriam is not equivocal or ambivalent, but positive; however, her public voice has been diminished with respect to the biblical text. Though she is still honored by the people, her only role in *LAB* is in her father's household. She does not quote prophets, only messengers of God; but she does make allusions to the biblical story. She is not mirrored or confirmed, but she is paired with positive characters and God makes a gift in her honor.

8.4.2 *Jael, Seila, and Elumah*

In the biblical portrait of **Jael**, she is a triumphant foreign woman who slays Israel's enemy. The song of Deborah celebrates her bloody feat;¹⁹ Jael's only recorded words are an invitation to Sisera to turn aside to her tent, and her exultant announcement to Barak to come see the man he was seeking.

LAB's version of Jael does most of her speaking in the privacy of her tent or when she is alone with the sheep.²⁰ She does not reference the prophets, nor does she allude to any major biblical concepts such as the covenant. This is in keeping with the fact that she is not an Israelite; however, she knows enough to be able to speak of the God of Israel and to employ a common biblical metaphor for the relationship between God and Israel.²¹

As I pointed out in Section 3.5.3.1, on Undermining, though Pseudo-Philo's Jael asks for certain signs from God, it is not clear that she receives them. Her numerous communications to God are never answered directly, though she is successful in her attempt to kill Sisera. No one comments on her other than Sisera who notes that she is beautiful.

Seila, the named and loquacious daughter of Jephthah, does indeed instruct her father. While we know for certain that the discussion with

¹⁹ And likely her bloody feet, too, as Sisera sank between her legs after she crushed his skull.

²⁰ Only at the beginning—when she goes out to meet Sisera—and at the end—when she goes out to meet Barak—does she venture outside the homestead.

²¹ An extensive analysis of this metaphoric use occurs in the preceding chapter.

Jephthah took place outside the house, she appears to be in private conversation with her father. She quotes from no prophet in order to buttress her arguments, though she makes an extended allusion to Isaac and Abraham, freely re-interpreting that story to meet her present situation. I will not recapitulate the analysis of *LAB* 40:2, which can be found in Chapter 2.

God makes favorable comments upon Seila's character at 40:4, and the women of Israel establish an annual rite in her honor at 40:8. These conceptual blends have been analyzed in the section 3.6, Character and Reliability, and will not be repeated. But it is important to note that she does receive positive accolades from God for her plan, which included a very pointed directive about how one should feel when losing one's life for Israel, or the life of one's child.

Elumah is the wife of Manoah and the mother of Samson. Chapter 42 tells the story of her desire for a child and God's healing of her sterility.²² Elumah's discourse occurs entirely in the home setting: within the house and in the family field. She speaks only to her husband and to God's angel. Nowhere in the course of the story does Elumah quote a prophet; nor does she allude to the larger themes of the Bible. Neither the narrator nor God comments upon Elumah, though the reader learns at 42:3 that God has listened to her: *Sed nunc exaudivit Dominus vocem tuam, et intendit lacrimis tuis et aperuit metram tuam*. (But now the Lord has heard your voice and seen your tears and opened your womb.) Since being heard by God is a positive thing in the biblical framework, one can assume that the overall blend of Elumah's character is positive.

8.4.3 *Hannah*

In Pseudo-Philo, **Hannah** is introduced after the people are unable to find a leader to rule over them. Though selected, her husband Elkanah has refused to serve. As in the biblical version, Hannah is harassed by her rival wife, Peninnah; in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, however, Peninnah's taunt includes an image from Psalm 128. Hannah's competitor also cites the story of Rachel and Jacob.²³

²² A thorough analysis of Elumah follows in Chapter 9.

²³ Peninnah is clearly marked as an outsider, however, when in 50:5 Hannah recalls her saying, "Where is your God in whom you trust?"

Hannah repeats a commonplace sneer against Israel²⁴ when at 50:5 she imagines Peninnah asking, *Where is your God in whom you trust?* In 51:6, she cites the prophet Asaph in the midst of her song of rejoicing, and quotes from Psalm 99. As Jacobson points out, though other psalms are attributed to Asaph, Psalm 99 is without attribution and the quote is incomplete; nonetheless, it still serves to establish her as an insider. Her self-reference as a “daughter of Batuel” conjures up the story of Rebecca, while Peninnah’s taunt invokes another childless ancestor, Rachel. But Hannah’s citation is a triumphant reference to the positive end of the story, not a “what if” as posed by Peninnah.

Two characters comment upon Hannah: Peninnah and Eli. Peninnah refers to Hannah as a dried up stick, and insinuates that she inappropriately glories in her personal appearance. Eli’s first comment is negative, when he accuses Hannah of being drunk. Later he tells her that God has heard her request—which is not hers alone, but that of the whole tribe—and that her womb and breasts were privileged. These comments do not provide mirroring or confirmation; rather, Hannah’s subsequent remarks mirror them. After she is told that her womb and breasts are honored, she proceeds to use these same images in her song of praise. Certainly, the image of her dripping breasts are a strong contradiction of the image of the dry stick.

8.4.4 *Summary: Miriam, Jael, Seila, Elumah, Hannah, and Penninah*

Like the characters that were clearly leaders for Israel—Amram, Kenaz, and Deborah—this majority of these women are presented in a positive light through confirmation and mirroring. Seila’s positive assessment comes directly from God, while God honors Miriam without making a direct observation on her character. Both Hannah and Elumah are told that they have been heard by God (Elumah by the angel, Hannah by Eli). Jael is the exception to the rule: she is successful in her mission but no one comments on her behavior positively nor is it mirrored exactly, which raises questions about God’s involvement and ultimate approval of her.

Biblical quotation does not occur with the same frequency in the stories of these women as in the stories of the characters we previously

²⁴ Jacobson (*Commentary*, 1091) points out that the communal taunt is found in Joel 2:17, Micah 7:10, Psalm 79:10 and Judith 7:20, while an individual application is in Psalm 42:4,11. It’s interesting that Psalm 79 is attributed to Asaph.

reviewed. It appears that quotations of prophets are reserved for public speech. Hannah, who quotes Asaph, does so in the hymn addressed to the nations. The only other quotation made is by her rival, Peninnah, who quotes the Psalms; but she does so in the privacy of the home.

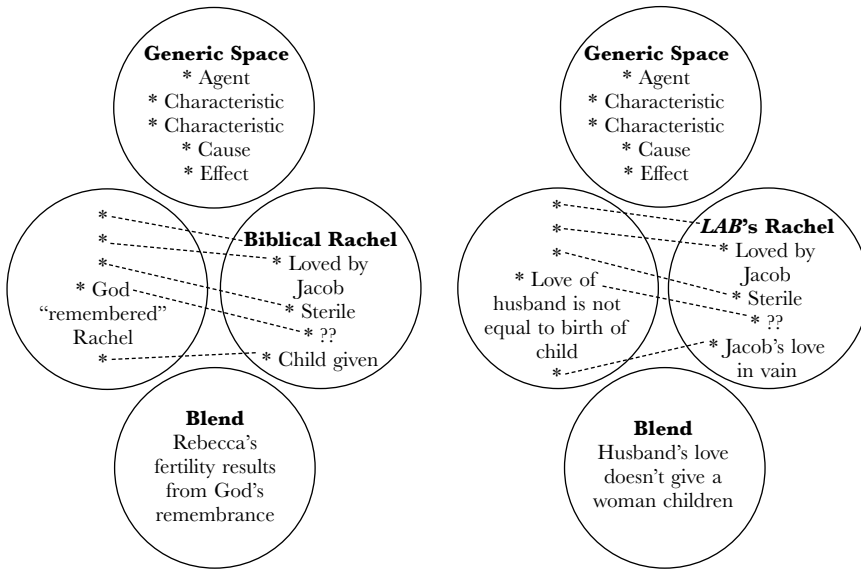
Numerous biblical allusions are made by these characters. Miriam alludes to the central biblical figure Moses in her conversation with family members;²⁵ Seila's reference to Abraham and Isaac, while addressed to her father, probably takes place in a public setting.²⁶ Hannah and Peninnah both speak of barren foremothers (Hannah in public, Peninnah in private), while Jael uses a commonplace biblical metaphor when talking to God.

From this assessment, it would appear that there is generally no question about whether a character is viewed positively or negatively. Allusions to biblical stories and even quotations from Psalms are made in private, and by both positive and negative characters, but prophetic reference is reserved for prophetic, public speech, by characters who are viewed positively. Likewise, allusion to biblical stories in public is reserved for positive characters, though negative characters are allowed to make references at home.

It is worth noting that at least one reference made by Peninnah was not to the biblical story as it was told, but to the biblical story as it might have happened had God not intervened. She used this re-told story as an emotional club on Hannah. In 50:2, Peninnah says, "What did it profit Rachel that Jacob loved her? Had not the fruit of her womb been given her, his love would have been in vain." (*Quid enim profuit Rachel, quod dilexit eam Iacob? Et nisi datus fuisset ei fructus ventris illius, in vanum fuerat dilectio eius.*) These phrases eliminate God's merciful action of Genesis 30:22 toward Rachel. Peninnah's counterfactual conceptual blend removes God's compassion from the story.

²⁵ While it seems obvious that Miriam would allude to Moses since they are reportedly kin, and it might seem equally obvious to refer to Isaac in the Seila story, one realizes reading Pseudo-Philo that anyone can refer to anyone else at any time, or that the connections one expects to be made are absent. Hence it is not patently obvious that such references will occur.

²⁶ Seila obviously made other speeches outside the home. But while we know that Seila went to the wise men, we have no record of what was said. In the second instance, when lamenting in the mountains, she has an audience of the virgins who accompanied her, but expresses no discernable biblical content in the lament.



Biblical Rachel: God Remembers *LAB* Rachel: Inadequacy of Jacob's Love

Peninnah's taunt is effective because the inadequacy of Jacob's love for Rachel maps directly onto the situation of Elkanah and Hannah.

8.5 JEPHTHAH, GIDEON, DEDILAH AND MICAH, AND THE MEDIUM AT ENDOR

8.5.1 *Jephthah*

The biblical **Jephthah** is an ambiguous figure. He is the son of a concubine, driven from his father's house and living as a bandit when he is asked to lead Israel. While he defends Israel successfully, his leadership is confined to military matters. Jephthah's public communications seem to imply that the god of the Ammonites, Chemosh, has some power and legitimacy.²⁷ He also makes a reckless vow to sacrifice whoever (or whatever) comes first out of his house if he is victorious. When he prevails, it is his daughter—his only child—who comes out first and is sacrificed. While the text makes no comment regarding the appropriateness of this act, Leviticus 18:21 forbids the offering of

²⁷ Other mentions of Chemosh in the Bible connect him with Moab rather than Ammon.

children by fire to Molech; and the burning of Manasseh's son as an offering in 2 Kings 21:6 is condemned and equated with soothsaying and other evils.

Jephthah in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is still an ambiguous figure. Although selected to lead the people into war, his only address to the community is short and nonspecific. He quotes no prophet, and delivers no explicit criticism of the community, but merely reminds the people to set their hearts on the Law. The specific part of the Law to which he refers seems to be the injunction against idolatry, as he argues that the Ammonites are guilty of leading the people astray after false gods.²⁸ Jephthah ends his short address in 39:6 by acknowledging that, *Etsi peccata nostra superabundant, misericordia tamen eius implet terram*. (Although our sins be abundant, nonetheless his mercy fills the earth.) When a prayer is offered to God, it is offered by all the people; Jephthah does not lead it nor is he included on the list of participants.²⁹

Jephthah's impetuous vow is very clearly commented upon in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, and the observations are not positive. God grows angry and states that Jephthah's vow will not be the reason for his victory. Likewise, Seila's comments to her father position him as irresolute as well as untutored in the biblical precedent for the situation.³⁰

From a cognitive perspective, God's response to Jephthah's vow is a fascinating series of mental constructions.

Et iratus est Dominus ira et dixit: Ecce oravit Ieptan ut offerat mihi omne quo primum obviaverit ei. Et nunc si canis primum obviaverit Iiepte, numquid canis offeretur mihi? Et nunc fiat oratio Iepte in primogenitum eius, id est in fructum ventris ipsius, et petitio ipsius in unigenitam eius. Ego autem liberans liberabo populum meum in isto tempore, non pro eo sed pro oratione quam oravit Israel. (39:11)

God grew angry and said, "Behold, Jephthah has said that he will offer to me whatever meets him first. Now if a dog should meet Jephthah first, will the dog be offered to me? Now let Jephthah's words be accomplished

²⁸ In the biblical text, this is a fight about land. Pseudo-Philo adds and accentuates the issue of idolatry.

²⁹ *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* 39:7 reads, *Et oravit omnis populus, unanimiter viri et mulieres, pueri lactentes*. (And all the people prayed together, men and women, children [and] infants.) Contrast this with *LAB* 25:6 where the first prayer is offered after Kenaz agrees to accept power: *Et tunc Cenez et Eleazar et omnes seniores et omnis synagoga unanimes oraverunt*. . . (And then Kenaz and Eleazar and all the elders and the whole congregation prayed together. . .) Jephthah may be leading them in war, but he's not leading them in prayer.

³⁰ See the discussion in Sections 2.2.2 and 2.5 in Chapter 2 for more of Seila's—and God's—view of Jephthah and his vow.

upon his own first-born, that is, upon the fruit of his own belly, and let his request be upon his only-begotten daughter. I however will free my people at this time, not on his account but because of the words that Israel said.

The writer of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* was in a bind when she came to this story. Everyone knew that Jephthah made a vow, that he won the war, and that his daughter was sacrificed. And everyone knew that sacrificing your child was wrong. So how does one negotiate the story? One could not simply change the ending; and it was not convincing to say, *God used to approve of child sacrifice but we don't do that anymore*. And if the vow was unacceptable, then why did Jephthah win?

Pseudo-Philo has to find a way to declare the vow wrong, but the sacrifice right. Jephthah's oath had introduced the cultural frame of vow. A vow is performative speech; it accomplishes something even as it is said. Once spoken, it cannot be taken back: to say "I vow" is to vow.³¹

In the cultural frame of vow, there is the vow, the one vowing, the one to whom the vow is made, the content (offering) of the vow, the performance—or nonperformance—of the vow, and an outcome—the one vowing obtains or does not obtain what they desired. It is understood that the offering must be of sufficient value in order to entice the one to whom the vow is made to grant the desire of the one making the sacrifice.

God's angry retort makes it clear that the vow in question is not pleasing to him. A vow to be executed only upon whoever or whatever³² shows up is not adequate. The implication is that Jephthah was trying to shortchange God, and he will not get away with it.

Because he has made a rash statement that could result in a substandard gift, Jephthah has sinned. The mental frame changes from "vow" to "displeasing God". When God is angry, mistakes are costly. And God makes sure that Jephthah is going to pay for this one. Jephthah has to fulfill the vow, because he has made it; but Seila becomes the offering requested by God. Because God has requested this sacrifice, she must go willingly like Isaac; but nothing can change the fact that the vow was ill conceived.

³¹ See Chapter 3, Section 3.5.3.3 for more on performative speech.

³² Jephthah says who ever, *omnis qui*. God says whatever, *omne quo*.

That being said, the writer has to re-frame the situation. And that is exactly what happens. God does NOT repeat Jephthah's characterization of the sacrifice, *omnis qui mihi primus obviaverit erit Domino in holocaustum*. (Whoever meets me first will be a burnt holocaust to God.) Instead, God uses a different word (variations on *oro*) to refer to Jephthah's vow as well as the people's plea. Changing the words changes the mental frame; the inputs are different. God re-frames Jephthah's commitment as a prayer, so it can be compared to the people's prayer, and declared less effective. Why? The reader is not told. But now the story contains a condemnation of Jephthah for making the vow, disapproval of child sacrifice, the reason why the war was won anyway, and a reason why the vow must be fulfilled even though it is ineffective and inappropriate.

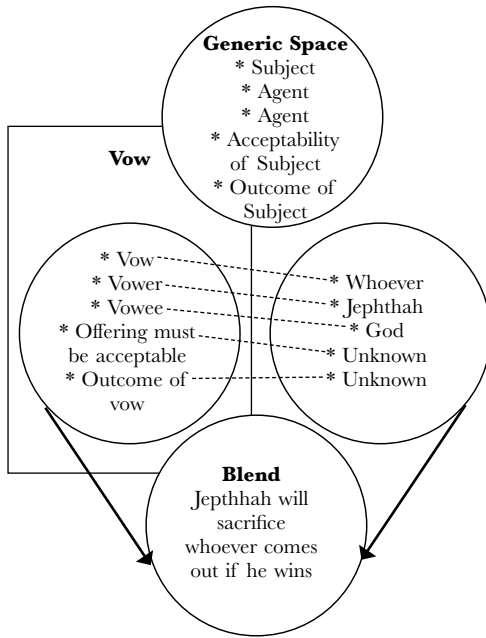
As diagrammed below, God has decided that the content—that is, who or what gets sacrificed—of Jephthah's vow is unacceptable. God has also said that the vow will be unsuccessful. But God wants to let Israel win the war, because God has taken pity on them. So God's got a problem—if he lets Jephthah offer to him, the offering could be an insult rather than praise, but it will be interpreted as adequate because Israel will have beat Ammon. So God needs to make sure that the best of Jephthah's household is required.

At the same time, it is very likely that Pseudo-Philo is uncomfortable with the idea that God approves of child sacrifice. So Seila is re-figured as both a thank offering and sin offering. As a thank offering, she is a holocaust a la Isaac. Her willingness makes her death acceptable, and her death fulfills her father's vow. But Seila is also a sin offering. As a sin offering, Seila's death can atone for her father's rash oath. The sin offering for an oath offered impetuously, Leviticus 5:4–6 tells us, is the female from the flock. Seila is the perfect sacrifice; her one willing death satisfies the two separate and distinct offerings needed.

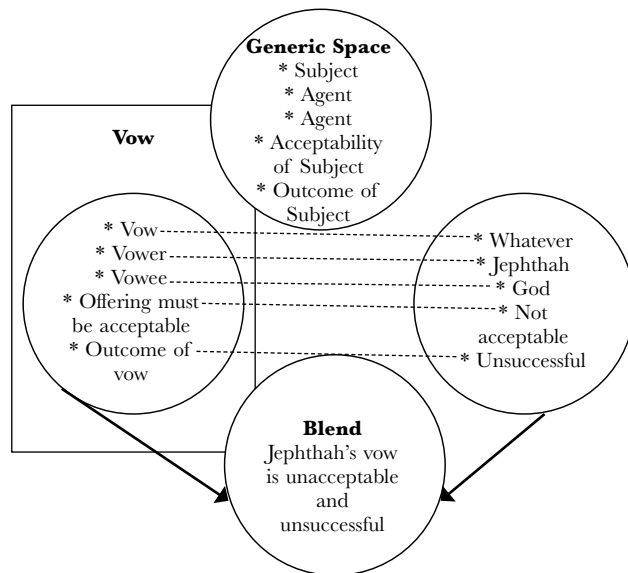
There is one conclusion that we need to acknowledge. Though Jephthah was condemned by God for his thoughtless vow, by the end of the story he has paid the price necessary. His "sin" has been redeemed by her death.

In the final mental blend that tells us about Jephthah's character, God compares Jephthah's prayer with the prayers of the people and, as noted earlier, finds it wanting.

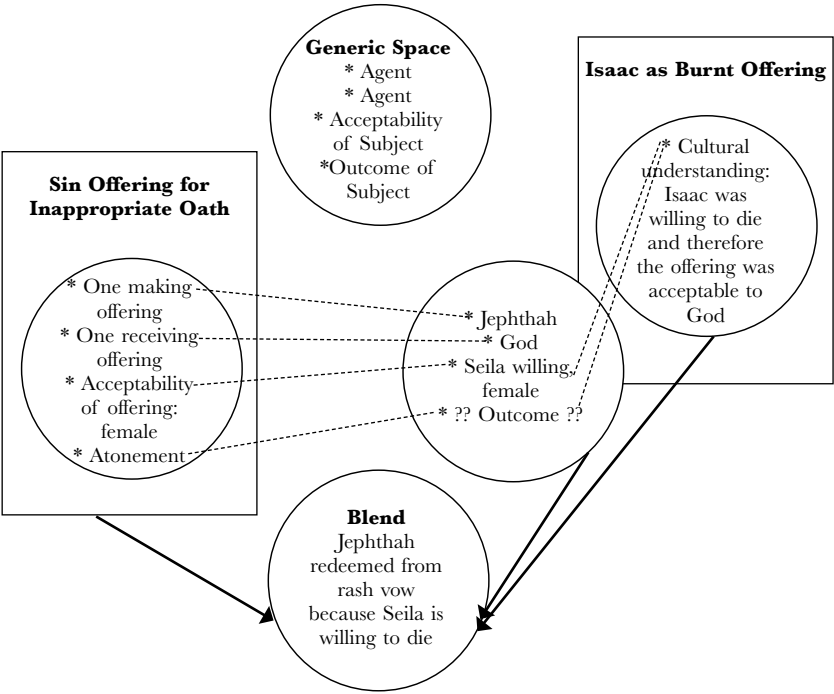
Overall, the short paragraph from God's character delivers a harsh judgment on Jephthah. He makes ill-considered vows and his prayers are inadequate. But Jephthah is not an entirely negative character by



Jephthah's Vow as seen by Jephthah



Jephthah's Vow as seen by God



Seila's Death as Holocaust and Purification Offering

any stretch of the imagination. He is, rather, weak and in need of assistance, which he receives. He wins the war because of the devoutness of the people and has his careless oath atoned for by his pious and wise daughter.

8.5.2 *Gideon*

Gideon's story presents another dilemma for Pseudo-Philo. In the Bible, God finds favor with Gideon and commissions him to lead Israel, promising to be with him in the process. After a series of signs, Gideon agrees to take the commission. His first job is to destroy the altar to Baal; he then leads the people into war with a reduced force, in order to show that God alone gives victory.

But at the end of the story, just after refusing hereditary rule—saying God alone shall rule over Israel—Gideon solicits gold from the army and makes an ephod which he places in his home town. As Judges 8:27 notes, "...all Israel played the harlot after it there, and it

became a snare to Gideon and to his family.”³³ No punishment ensues for Gideon; he has seventy sons, dies at a good old age, and is buried in his father’s tomb.

Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum revises both the call and the life of Gideon. The entire story is greatly compacted, and the destruction of Baal’s altar is assumed, not narrated.

In *LAB* 35:3, God calls Gideon because God wishes to punish Midian for their wickedness.³⁴ Deliverance comes for Israel not because they deserve it—they don’t—but “on account of those who are asleep.” (*[E]tiam non propter vos sed propter eos qui dormierunt.*) *LAB* 35:3.

Gideon makes no public teaching to the community; his only quotation occurs in the midst of a complaint to the angel at the beginning of the story. Gideon recalls that in Deuteronomy 7:6, God chooses Israel specially.³⁵ But he declares that God has forgotten the people and should let them die once and for all—*semel*—rather than suffer ongoing punishment. Like Peninnah, Gideon can quote scripture. And like Peninnah, Gideon quotes it in private. And finally, like Peninnah, Gideon does not quote scripture for the purpose of affirming God’s mercy but for presenting a mental blend where God’s mercy is absent.

Later, Gideon alludes to Moses’ request for a sign in order to justify his request for a sign; that is the only reference to a biblical theme throughout Pseudo-Philo’s retelling of Gideon’s story.

Neither the quote nor the allusion is intended to edify, instruct, or show trust in God. Instead, they are used to justify Gideon’s aggravations and fear. Gideon is able to remember what God should do but never speaks about what Israel should be doing.

No one but God comments on Gideon’s character. Even the victory against Midian, which in the biblical version results from God giving Midian into Gideon’s hand, is cast by Pseudo-Philo as the result of Midian’s sins rather than Gideon’s might.

After Gideon makes idols,³⁶ God speaks to himself in 36:4 about the problem of Gideon. Gideon has *inique gessit in me* (acted wickedly

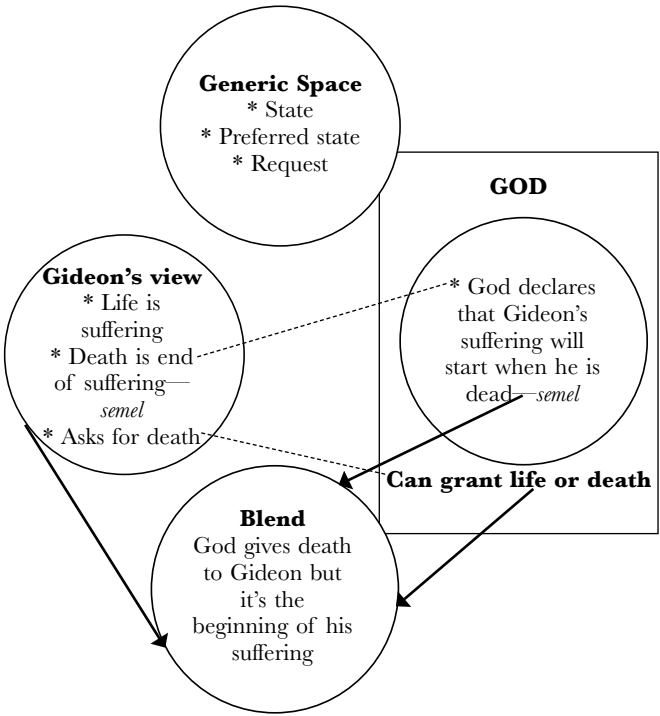
³³ Translation: Revised Standard Version.

³⁴ Israel deserves punishment too but that punishment will be delayed, God says.

³⁵ Deuteronomy 7 is a set of instructions, given by Moses to the people, about how one should deal foreigners in the land; 7:5 instructs Israel to break down their altars, dash in pieces their pillars, hew down their asherim, and burn their graven images with fire. These are apt instructions for Gideon.

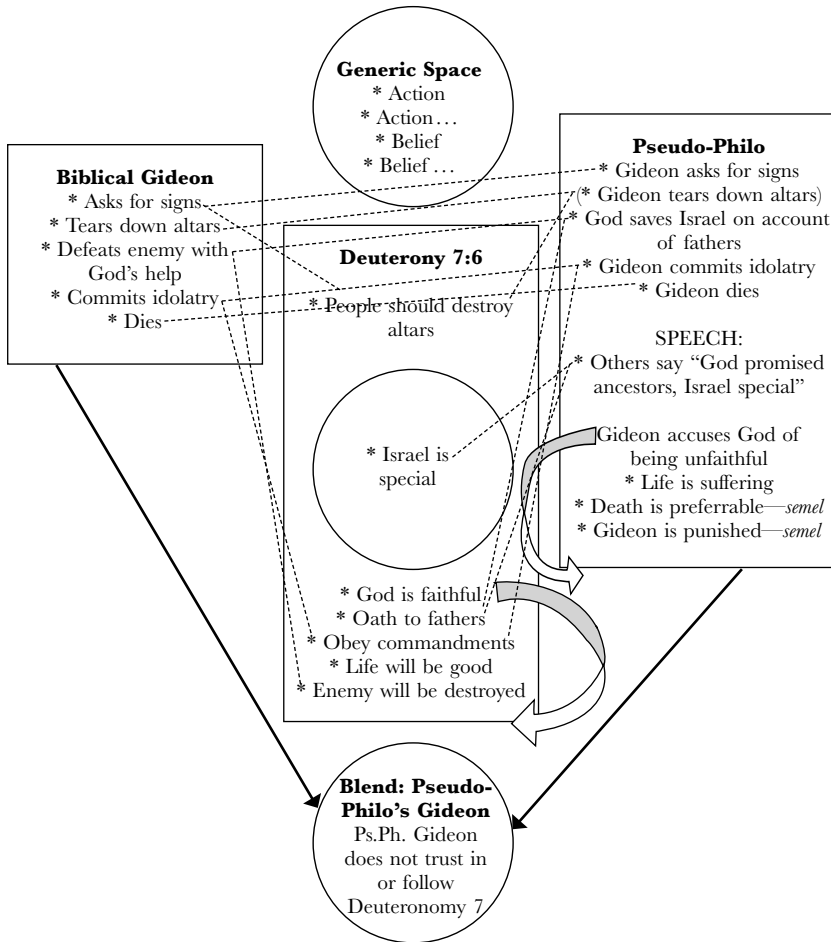
³⁶ In *LAB*, the ephod becomes idols.

against me), says God; but there is a problem with punishing him now. People might think that Baal is getting back at Gideon for destroying his altar. So God allows Gideon to live to a ripe old age, and defers punishment until after death: [*S*]ed postea cum mortuus fuerit Gedeon castigabo eum semel, eo quod deliquerit in me. (But afterwards, when Gideon is dead, I will chastise him once and for all because he sinned against me.) God grants Gideon’s original desire that his suffering be done with “once and for all.” Gideon wants to die because he sees life as ongoing punishment, with death as the ultimate penalty. While he gets his wish to die, his suffering does not end with death—it just begins. The conceptual blend in this is quite neat:



Gideon's "Prayer" is Answered

Gideon's opening speech, which quoted Moses, frames a particular view of the world. In Deuteronomy 7, Moses tells the people that they should deal with foreigners by tearing down their altars; that God has chosen Israel specially; that God made an oath to the fathers; that



Pseudo-Philo's Gideon

Israel must keep the commandments; and that if they do so, their life will be abundant and their enemies will be destroyed.

The story as told by Pseudo-Philo revisits these same themes, but in a different order. As the narrative opens, the land is filled with idolatrous altars. Gideon complains that God has forgotten Israel, and that he wants to die. He is told that God will deliver Israel because of the ancestors. The destruction of the altars is inferred, and the enemies of Israel are defeated. Gideon does not keep the commandment against idolatry; and he dies at an old age.

The reader thus brings three different scenarios into consideration: Gideon as told by the Bible, Gideon as told by Pseudo-Philo, and the text of Deuteronomy 7. In the conceptual blend above, the quotation of a prophet does not add the authority of the prophet to the character, because the character is only making the quotation in order to refute it. Gideon not only contests the idea that God has chosen Israel and is going to care for it; he even contests the idea that life is worth living. If Gideon had looked more closely at the source he was citing, he would have realized that the altars should have been torn down before he started complaining; God's faithfulness expects Israel's faithfulness.

8.5.3 *Dedilah and Micah*

Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum's **Dedilah** corresponds to an unnamed mother in Judges 17, whose son **Micah** stole silver coins from her. When he confessed, she dedicated the silver to God and asked Micah to have some of it made into a graven image and a molten image. Micah placed these images in a shrine he had made, along with an ephod and teraphim; he installed first his son and then a traveling Levite as his priest. Later, the Levite and the images were pillaged by the Danites. This curious episode occurs between the story of Samson's demise through Delilah's trickery, and the rape of the Levite's concubine. The only observation made about the situation is that, "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did what was right in his own eyes."

In the book of Judges, no overt attempt is made to connect this story with either the one preceding or the one following, although the entire book shows a gradual breaking down of covenant behavior on the part of the Israelites.

In *LAB* 44, the story begins with a near identical notice: "In those days there was no leader in Israel, but each one did what was pleasing in his own eyes." (*Et in diebus illis non erat dux in Israel, sed faciebat unusquisque que placita errant ante conspectum eorum.*) There is no theft by the son: rather, the silver and gold belong to Micah, and Dedilah tells her son to make a name for himself before he dies, by having his gold made into idols and becoming a priest. She encourages him to set himself up as an oracle with an altar for sacrifice and a pillar for incense, and dictates a price list for his services. Micah's response is to praise her for her advice. He notes that her name will be greater than his, and says that in the last days she herself will be asked to interpret the signs.

Micah himself makes the idols, and each idol is designed to assist in a specific kind of oracle.³⁷

Neither Dedilah or Micah reference any biblical text or story, nor do they quote from the prophets. Their actions cause God to go on a furious tirade, declaring that he will uproot the earth and destroy the whole race of men. He marches through the commandments one by one in 44:6 and shows how Israel agreed to each; and then describes how they broke every one. Every sin is tied back into idolatry, and the entire list ends with the accusation that they lusted after foreign women. (*Et concupierunt mulieres alienas.*) God declares that because Israel has strayed after Micah and Dedilah's idols, they will suffer greatly. There will be a "measure for measure" punishment, and those who allowed sin to continue will be destroyed along with the sinners, according to 45:6. Thus the Benjaminite war is the fault of Micah and Dedilah and those who allowed them to exist.

It is God who makes the comments upon the character of Dedilah and Micah, when he declares that Micah will burn in the fire and his mother will rot away before him while alive, and that they will exchange recriminations with each other instead of compliments. This sentence is carried out later, at 47:12.³⁸

The portraits of Dedilah and Micah in these chapters leave no question as to whether the reader should regard them as negative characters. Lacking biblical quotation, allusion, or positive assessment, they are clearly negative characters.

8.5.4 *The Medium at Endor*

The Medium at Endor appears in 1 Samuel 28. Here the reader learns that Samuel had died and that Saul had banished mediums from the land. The medium is an Israelite woman who is importuned by Saul to bring Samuel back to speak with him. She initially refuses, but acquiesces when pressed by Saul and assured of protection. After an anguished discussion in which Saul learns that God has abandoned him, Saul collapses. The medium then insists on tending to Saul by

³⁷ Jacobson does an excellent job of showing just how each different animal is metaphorical for a certain kind of petition. *Commentary*, 1006–1009.

³⁸ See Chapter 3, Section 3.5.3.3, for additional discussion of the fate of Dedilah and Micah.

slaughtering the fatted calf and making bread for him and his servants. Overall, her portrait is sympathetic to neutral.

In Pseudo-Philo's version of this tale at *LAB* 64, Saul banishes wizards from the land out of a desire to make a name for himself. God immediately notices that his intentions were bad, and declares that he will therefore end up going to consult a diviner—again, a measure for measure punishment.

The Medium of Endor becomes a Midianite woman named Sedecla; her “father” was the Midianite sorcerer who led Israel astray earlier.³⁹ When she raises Samuel, she notes that she has never seen anything like this in all the years she had been raising the dead for the Philistines. Unlike the biblical story, she does not recognize Samuel when she raises him: she just knows he is a heavenly being. Samuel himself explicitly states that it was neither Saul nor Sedecla who brought him back, but God: God knew what was going to happen and ordered Samuel to come back even before he died. Hence Sedecla even lacked the power to do what she was doing; it only came about because of God's will.

In *LAB*'s version, Sedecla offers Saul no succor, and he leaves knowing that he is going to his death and the death of his sons.

The Medium of Endor as presented by Pseudo-Philo quotes nothing from the prophets and makes no allusion to biblical stories. Any sympathetic characteristics present in the biblical portrait are erased. Her character is outlined in a purely negative fashion, both by the people's comment on her pedigree and by Samuel's assertion that she was not capable of raising him. She is a foreign female medium descended from an evil magician, and her illicit power is inadequate.

8.5.5 *Summary: Jephthah, Gideon, Dedila and Micah, and the Medium of Endor*

All of these five characters have a large effect on Israel; however, not one quotes from a prophet. Gideon is the only character that quotes from scripture, and he does so in private rather than public. Both the quote and allusion he makes are intended to justify his own petulance with God. God's mercy and care for Israel are removed from his references.

³⁹ Father here means ancestor. Her “father” was active prior to the time of Gideon, according to Pseudo-Philo.

Jephthah alone addresses the community; and though he does not cite scripture, he does speak of the need to set one's heart on the Law, avoid idolatry, and to trust and hope in God no matter how hopeless things appear. Jephthah's scriptural references, unlike Gideon's, are intended for the edification of the community.

Dedilah, Micah, and the medium of Endor make no biblical references.

God comments directly upon the characters of Gideon, Dedilah and Micah, so that there is no question about whether one should view them positively. Since none of these characters had received direct condemnation in the biblical stories, it seems appropriate that God—rather than another character—would have to weigh in for the judgment to be effective. Each of them receives a punishment tailored to his or her life.

Regarding the character of the medium of Endor, Sedecla is not evaluated by God. Instead, the people and Samuel comment upon her, and that seems to be sufficient denunciation, since this character was never particularly positive in the biblical story.

Only Jephthah avoids a negative assessment. In the story line, no one but God comments about him: but that harsh assessment is redeemed by his daughter's sacrifice.

Hence, in these characters, public speaking about scriptural matters is once again confined to a positive character; scripture can be quoted or alluded to by negative characters but they usually contradict the normal meaning and remove God's mercy from the conceptual blend; and the assessment of one's character is generally quite clear from the comments of other characters.

8.6 CONCLUSIONS

There appear to be three parameters at work in Pseudo-Philo's use of quotation and allusion and these parameters affect how the reader understands the moral composition of a given character.

The first parameter is **attribution**. The quotation of a prophet with attribution to that prophet is reserved to positive characters. While "even the devil can quote scripture," it seems that quotation with credit is reserved for people who intend to follow the law. Cognitively, this makes sense, as attribution augments the authority of the one quoting with that of the one quoted; Pseudo-Philo would not wish to increase

the stature of a negative character. So, for instance, when Gideon quotes Moses, there is no acknowledgement that the original speaker was Moses and no crediting of Moses' authority.

The second parameter is **setting**. Quotation with attribution takes place exclusively in public speech. If Pseudo-Philo wants to enhance a character's reputation, it happens in the communal domain. As noted earlier, the authority of the prophets is cognitively accrued to the character. It is interesting to note that Deborah, who probably needed some shoring up as a viable leader because she was a female, summons not just one but four prophets in her inaugural speech.

Allusions and quotations do happen in private conversation, but their use is not restricted to purely positive characters. As noted above, Gideon quotes from Moses, while Peninnah alludes to the Psalms and to Rachel's story. It would seem that scripture is open for interpretation. But all interpretations are not equal. While Peninnah speculates on what would have happened to Rachel had she been childless, Hannah's mention of Rebecca celebrates the miracle that God worked for her and compares it to what God will do for Israel. Peninnah and Gideon's allusions eliminate God's compassion from the past reference and thus block out the possibility of that compassion in the present.

Overall, positive characters use scripture to rouse the nation to obedience and faith in God. Negative characters use biblical quotes to justify their personal opinion.

Almost every character examined alludes to scripture; the exceptions were Micah, Dedilah, and Sedecla. Since the biblical story holds that these three were all involved with idolatry or necromancy—and lacked God's approval, unlike Gideon—they were already outside the "boundaries" of the community as drawn by Pseudo-Philo.

The final parameter regarding quotes and allusions is **frequency**. It appears that positive characters generally use quote and allusion more often than negative or neutral characters. Again, this makes sense, especially for characters that Pseudo-Philo is constructing from the ground up (e.g., Kenaz, Amram). Multiple references yield a stronger base on which to build the personality in question. Hence Amram speaks of the covenant, quotes God, cites God's promise of fruitfulness to Abraham, references dates and times, and re-interprets Tamar; Kenaz is molded after Joshua and roots out evil in the same way, quotes Moses and Joshua, conquers like Gideon, is accused like David, and pontificates on Adam.

The final general observation I would like to make is that there is generally no question in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* as to whether one should consider a character positively or negatively. The most common marker is a comment by God; once in a while, if things are terribly obvious, Pseudo-Philo leaves the comments to lesser beings such as the people and Samuel in the story of the medium of Endor. Hence the reader has a very strong marker to show who is interpreting the Bible and tradition appropriately: one does not need to guess. If, as Deborah has argued, one should model one's self on the ancestors, there should be no mistake which of those ancestors is an apt model.

CHAPTER NINE

HUMILITY AND LEADERSHIP

9.1 INTRODUCTION

In his 1980 article *Good and Bad Leaders in Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, George Nickelsburg lays out the properties that constitute a good leader. A good leader is obedient to covenant law. Both the leader's actions and speech serve to "implement God's purposes and set good public examples." When a leader speaks, reassurance—that God will ultimately fulfill the covenant promises and will not abandon the community—is of central importance. When a leader acts, his or her actions need to show that they trust in God for deliverance—and if deliverance does not occur, "that he [God] will still act in justice."¹

Frederick J. Murphy critiques Nickelsburg's finding in his 1993 book *Pseudo-Philo: Critiquing the Bible*. While he agrees that leaders show complete trust, he also points out that trust is coupled with "complete dependence on God... [which] usually means not taking action on one's own initiative, even if that action is based on belief that God will come to the rescue."² Fisk, following Murphy, argues that it is "solitary trust in God and... [the] stubborn refusal to flee the [life-threatening situation in which one finds oneself]" that characterize a good protagonist in *Pseudo-Philo*.³

Erich Gruen prefers a reading of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* with more nuance. Leaders exhibit more than faith and obedience, according to Gruen: they give God advice, worry about God's ineffectualness, lack full confidence, and criticize God's judgment. Their job is not blind faith and unswerving obedience but a faith and obedience that include challenge and confrontation with a God who needs to "live

¹ George W. E. Nickelsburg, "Good and Bad Leaders in Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*," *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism: Profiles and Paradigms* (Chico: Scholars Press, 1980) 61–2.

² Frederick J. Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo: Rewriting the Bible*, (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) 235.

³ Bruce Fisk, *Do You Not Remember*, 295.

up to obligations.”⁴ Initiating action is definitely included in the tasks of a leader.

In the previous sections I have explored how *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* establishes authority for the text’s overall theological viewpoint as well as for the characters whom it designates as leaders. I have shown how quotation and attribution work cognitively so as to increase a speaker’s authority, and how allusion to biblical stories can also augment the influence of a given character. Finally, I have explored the ways that narrative and commentary shape our cognitive understanding of certain characters.

But every question regarding authority is not a question of who is leading the community to war and delivering public addresses on observing the Law. Since the text uses as its primary source the book of Judges, we are by necessity dealing with a series of persons who acted as leaders for Israel. But I would argue that Pseudo-Philo’s reshaping of this text has also reshaped just who constitutes a leader, and how.

In Nickelsburg’s article, he notices that Seila’s willingness to die is cause for God’s approval. She serves as a public example to the community.⁵ His summary arguments include her as one of the protagonists whose courageousness contrasts with other’s “inaction, fidgeting, or avoidance of responsibility.”⁶ In this I concur with Nickelsburg: not every good example refrains from making plans or taking action. Likewise I would agree with Gruen that leaders are not limited to faith and obedience. But what kind of public example does Seila provide? That daughters should die willingly to prevent fathers from breaking vows? That children may be sacrificed in order to assure that Israel survives? If she is a good example of something, is it anything more than blind obedience?

In Pseudo-Philo 35:5, when Gideon protests that he doesn’t have the community status to lead Israel in battle against Midian, the angel answers, *Homines enim intendunt in gloriam seculi et divitias, Deus autem in directum bonum et in mansuetudinem*. (Humans surely look to worldly glory and riches, but God to that which is upright and good and to humility.)

I would argue that Pseudo-Philo is not just interested in appropriate leaders but in appropriate authorities. Some of those appropriate

⁴ Erich S. Gruen, “Subversive Elements in Pseudo-Philo,” 50.

⁵ I have argued in the previous section that she actually serves to redeem Jephthah from the sin of his stupid vow, rather than redeem Israel from bondage.

⁶ Nickelsburg, “Good and Bad Leaders,” 61.

authorities are acknowledged leaders; but sometimes characters who don't even step outside the confines of their own homes are the ones who exhibit the most certainty in their beliefs and guidance for others about what God wants from, and for, Israel. Their authority is moral authority; the combination of trust and humility, the *mansuetudinem* of the angel's speech. It is this trust and humility that allows Abram—faced with death in the furnace if he refuses to escape to the hills—to say in *LAB* 6:11, *Et nunc vivit in quo confido, quia non movebor de loco meo in quo posuerunt me. Et si fuerit aliquod peccatum meum ut consumens consumar, fiat voluntas Dei.* (And now, as surely as God in whom I trust lives, I will not move from my place where they have put me. If there be any sin of mine such that I should be burned, let the will of God be done.)

In order to explore this concept of moral authority, I will examine a group of characters who occupy traditional “leader” roles—Abram, Amram, Kenaz, and Deborah—and then several whose lives center around the home—Seila, Elumah, and Hannah—in order to identify the cognitive blends that lie behind their claims to moral authority. It is my contention that the quality of humility, expressed in the acknowledgement of one's sinfulness or lowliness and God's ultimate power, as well as the willingness to risk, is central to these characters and to Pseudo-Philo's view of a good leader. Taking action in humility and without concern for personal consequences is fundamental to living appropriately in God's sight.

Humility, for the women in this text whose scope of life falls almost entirely inside the home, will not normally involve the risk of life, but rather the risk of humiliation. Pseudo-Philo is making the clear point that faithfulness to God is a matter of public and private behavior; models for both are provided in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*.

9.2 ABRAM⁷

In Pseudo-Philo 6:9–11, Abram is presented with a counterfactual choice by Joktan, the leader who wishes to spirit him and his compatriots away so they will not be burned alive for refusing to participate in the idolatrous public building project. Joktan reasons that because God is powerful, they should trust that God will allow him to rescue

⁷ “Abram” rather than Abraham, because this incident took place before the covenant (at *LAB* 8:3).

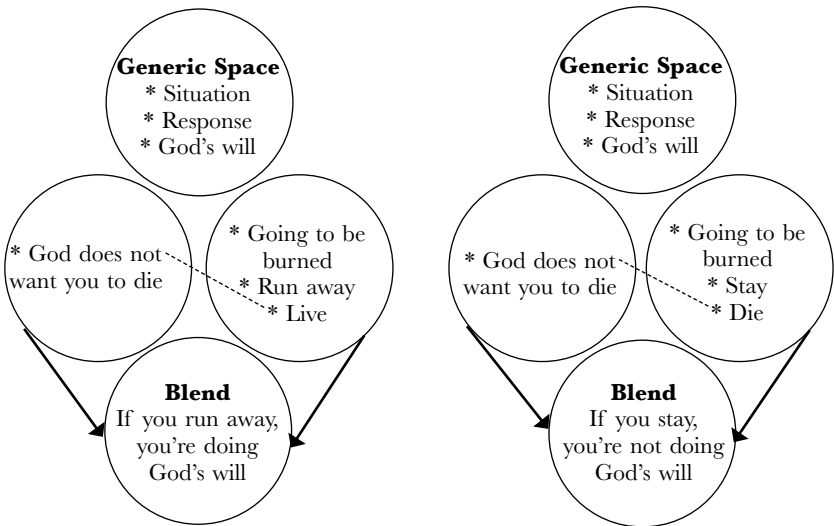
them and will eventually send his wrath upon the people of the land. Joktan “knows” that the evil plan will be futile, and he assumes that it is God’s will for the men to live.

Et vocavit ad se princeps illos duodecim viros, et dixit ad eos: Confidentes estote et non timeatis, non enim moriemini. Fortis est enim Deus in quo confiditis; et ideo stabiles estote in ipso, quia liberabit et salvabit vos.

Abram autem solus tacuit. Et dixit dux ad eum: Quare non respondes mihi Abram serve Dei? Respondit Abram et dixit: Ecce ego fugio hodie in montana et, si evasero ignem, exient de montibus fere bestie et comedent nos, aut esce nobis deficient et moriemur fame, et inveniemur fugientes ante populum terre, cadentes in peccatis nostris. Et nunc vivit in quo confido, quia non movebor de loco meo in quo posuerunt me. Et si fuerit aliquod peccatum meum ut consumens consumar, fiat voluntas Dei.

The chief [Joktan] summoned to himself those twelve men and said to them, “Be confident and do not fear, for you will not die. For God in whom you trust is mighty, and therefore be secure in him, for he will free and save you... [Joktan tells them his plan for their escape, and eleven of the twelve thank him.]

But Abram alone was silent. The leader said to him, “Why do you not answer me, Abram servant of God?” Abram answered and said, “Behold, today I flee to the mountains. If I have escaped the fire, wild beasts will come forth from the mountains and devour us; or we will lack food and die of famine. We will be found to have escaped the people of the land but to have fallen because of our sins. And now, as surely as God in



Counterfactual Choices as Seen by Joktan

whom I trust lives, I will not move from my place where they have put me. If there be any sin of mine such that I should be burned, let the will of God be done. (Selections from *LAB* 6:9 and 6:11)

Abram has a very different idea of God's will, and how one should act in this life or death situation. He begins by assuming that God's will cannot necessarily be known by humans, no matter how devout. Abram also makes the assumption that all God's decisions are just: if one dies, it means one has sinned grievously. Even good human beings can commit sins of such magnitude that they deserve death, and only God can judge that. If one lives, it need not mean that one is sinless; it could just mean that God has been merciful.

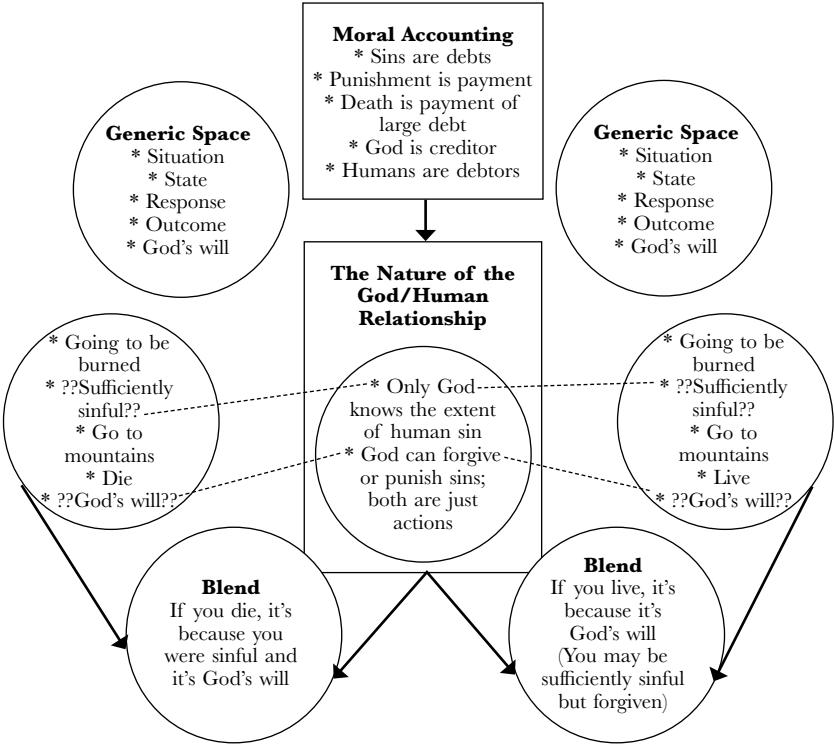
The question of sin and punishment brings into play the cultural frame of moral accounting, a frame which was clearly understood by Pseudo-Philo's audience and which is familiar to members of our present culture.⁸ In the frame of moral accounting, one uses the language of accounting—debts, credits, payments, loans, adding, subtraction, and so on—to speak of moral behavior. So one who transgresses the moral code has “reduced” their moral standing; one who is transgressed against is “owed”; one can “earn” a crown in heaven; one gets “paid back” for what one does, good or ill.

In this example presented by Abram, the frame of moral accounting is combined with the God/human relationship. God is the creditor and humans are the debtors; obedience, trust, faithfulness, and the like are credits and sins are debts. If something bad happens to a human it is only because God is collecting on a debt. Only God knows for sure how substantial one's liability is; but regardless of the amount in question, the obligation must be paid. Moving to a different place—i.e., going to the mountains—does not invalidate the debit.

If one has transgressed sufficiently against God, one will owe one's life. God, of course, can be a benevolent creditor and forgive the debt; but there is no guarantee of that outcome.

⁸ For a thorough explanation of the metaphoric concept of Moral Accounting and its application in contemporary life, see George Lakoff, *Moral Politics: What Conservatives Know That Liberals Don't* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). For application of this model to a text of the same era as Pseudo-Philo, see Bonnie Tigner Howe, *Because You Bear This Name: Conceptual Metaphor and the Moral Meaning of 1 Peter*. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2006.)

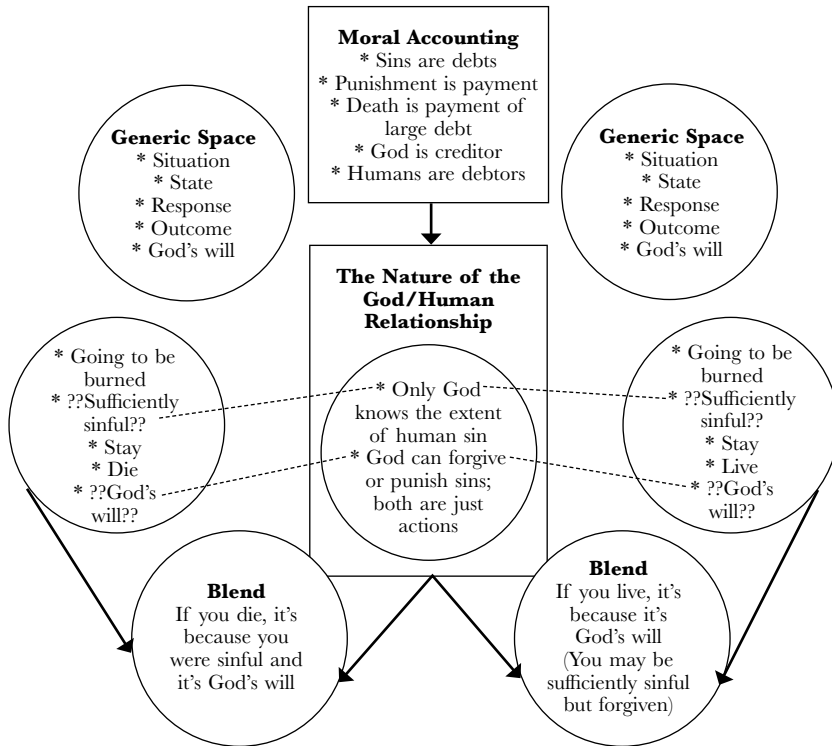
So Abram’s view of the situation differs greatly from that of Joktan. He does not share the leader’s certainty about what God wants and will do. His cognitive blends combine a frame of moral accounting with assumptions about the God/human relationship to show the following:



Abram’s Reasoning About Going to the Mountains

The diagram above shows the cognitive blends Abram uses in his decision about whether to go escape to the mountains, as Joktan recommends. In the counterfactuals introduced by Abram’s speech, there are many variables: Abram could be sufficiently sinful, or not; he could stay, or run away; God’s will could be that he die, or that he live.

A number of assumptions also serve as inputs. Abram wants to clarify that if he stays in prison and is ultimately burned in the furnace, it’s not because he’s made a stupid mistake, nor because those who want to kill him are right, nor because his enemies or their gods are more



Abram's Counterfactual Reasoning About Staying

powerful than Abram's God. He will die, or be saved, regardless of where he is located, because his life is in God's hands, not the hands of the people of the land. If God wills it, Abram must deserve it.

The above illustration shows the counterfactuals represented by his reasoning. Abram's logic is much different from that of Joktan, and it assumes a basic disconnect between the reckoning of God and the thinking of human beings. By refusing to make claims he acknowledges God's greatness, inscrutability, and mercy, as well as his own powerlessness and willingness to rely on God's mercy.⁹ The moral authority of Abram in this situation is based on his own confession of sinfulness

⁹ Gruen sees Abram's arguments as injecting a note of "sardonic pragmatism"; in this he differs from virtually all other commentators, who are inclined to explain this as an example of Abram's faithful belief that God alone is in control of events.

and his willingness to risk his life. He is, in essence, announcing that he is God's debtor.

9.3 AMRAM

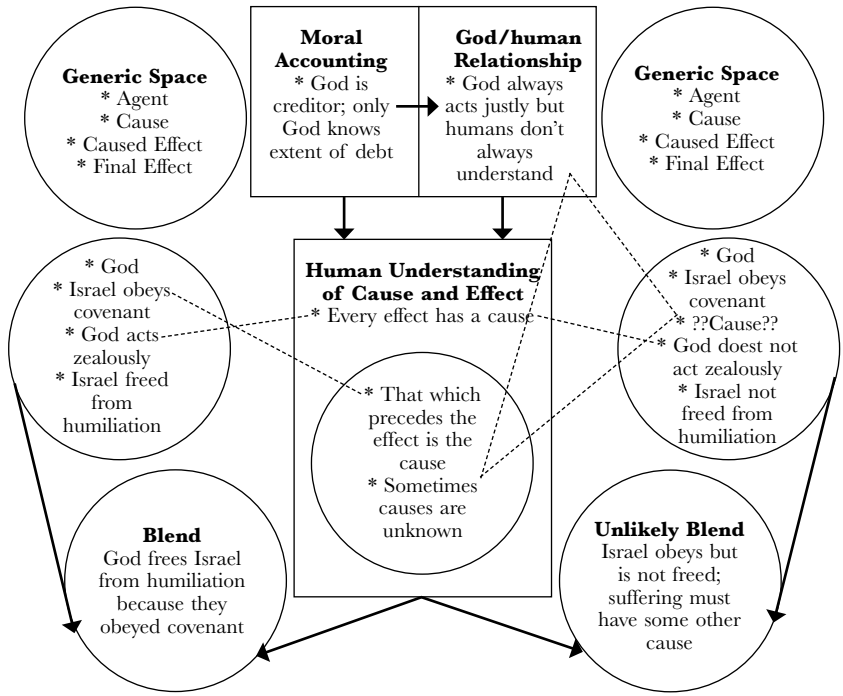
Amram, after defying the elders to argue that even in the face of Egypt's threats Israel must not quit reproducing, concludes with an exhortation to the community to behave like Tamar. Three times in *LAB* 9:6, his closing lines, he uses conditional language about the outcome of his proposed path: *Si potuerimus, quis sciet, si pro hoc*: Amram's language shows hopeful expectation of a positive result. His final statement—*Et quis sciet si pro hoc zelabitur Deus, ut liberet nos de humiliatione nostra?* (Who knows, perhaps God will act zealously on account of this to free us from our humiliation?)—introduces counterfactual mental spaces where God is free to act as God will.

But humans are not. The appropriate action is clear, according to Amram. Israel must live according to their covenant agreement. But what God does is not their business; a favorable result is not guaranteed. Amram's conditional language recognizes God's absolute power and justice. Amram hopes that the Israelites will not have to cast, *proicio*, their children into the river; in much the same way, he argued that God would not *proicio*, cast into nothingness, the Israelites. But God has reasons and power that humans don't know about; they can only make their best guess about what they are supposed to do and leave the decision in God's hand.

This mental construction assumes three common frames. The first two are the frames we used in the blends for Abram: moral accounting and the God/human relationship. When something "unjust" seems to occur, it is simply because one is unable to comprehend the entire situation. The cause of suffering is unknown—not non-existent, merely unidentified—error on the part of the people.

The third frame is that of cause and effect, where human beings commonly assume that when one act precedes another, it precipitates the other. This frame includes the fact that one does not always know the cause of an effect; it does not include the concept that an effect is without a cause.

Amram's worldview leaves God free to act, and puts responsibility for death and suffering on the shoulders of human beings, not God. This closed loop system, where there must be a punishment for every crime, and hence a crime for every punishment, is endemic to *Liber*



Amram's Counterfactual Reasoning about God's Behavior

Antiquitatum Biblicarum, and inescapable when one is operating in Pseudo-Philo's particular understanding of moral accounting.¹⁰

Amram exhibits moral authority in this situation because he is willing to admit that he does not know what God desires, but he attempts to fulfill the covenant anyway. This makes him both vulnerable—he is risking the life of his unborn children—and powerless to avoid the risk. Moral authority springs not only from the ability to interpret God's will correctly, but also from the willingness to acknowledge God's power and freedom. Amram has attempted to do both.

9.4 KENAZ

In *LAB* 27:7, Kenaz goes down alone to an Amorite camp. In a scene reminiscent of Gideon—except that Kenaz leaves even the 300 soldiers behind—Kenaz contemplates moving against the enemy in the night.

¹⁰ See the discussion in 11.2.2, "The Nature of Human Nature."

He prays to God to give him a sign so that he can know if he has been heard. But he also holds open the possibility that God will deliver him to his enemies rather than grant him victory.

Si autem me non cognoverint et putaverint alium esse, scio quoniam non exaudisti me sed tradidisti me inimicis meis. Nam etsi traditus trador morti, scio quod propter delicta mea non exaudivit me Dominus et tradidit me inimicis meis. Non autem perdet hereditatem suam in morte mea.

But if they do not recognize me and think I am someone else, I know that you have not heard me but have delivered me to my enemies. But even if I be given over to death, I know that on account of my sins the Lord has not heard me and has handed me over to my enemies. But he will not destroy his portion through my death. (*LAB* 27:7)¹¹

As we saw in the analysis of Abram, Kenaz' argument assumes that even an important leader could die because of his transgressions. There is no possibility that Kenaz lacks sufficient sin to warrant his death: the frames of Moral Accounting and God's absolute freedom with relation to human beings are both active in the blend. Death is not the result of God's capriciousness or powerlessness, but is always deserved.¹² One can only request and hope for God's forbearance.

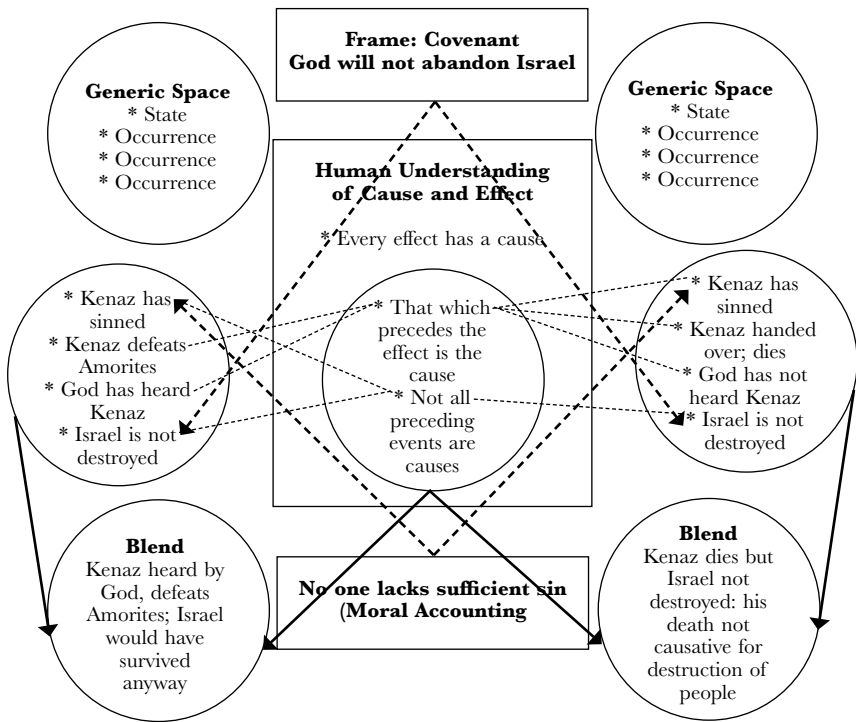
The second assumption in Kenaz' reasoning is that God will keep the covenant with Israel no matter what; even the death of its ordained leader does not mean that Israel will be destroyed. Kenaz refuses to claim that his end is somehow decisive for the community. There is a disconnect between military victory and the continued existence of the community, between the survival of the leader and the survival of Israel. God's covenant promises are not dependent on the commander or ruler or chief or judge. The covenant is equally available, and all are equally responsible for keeping it.

Kenaz' argument mirrors the situation when he was chosen to lead Israel. At that time, numerous members of the community had sinned. While their sin affected the whole community, their demise left the community cleansed.¹³ In this example, Kenaz makes the same argument. His sins—if they are sufficient to cause his death—are not so grave as to cause God to punish the entire community. They affect

¹¹ Notice how the Moral Accounting cognitive frame is imbedded into our language: Kenaz says, "[O]n account of my sins" and we don't even notice the metaphor.

¹² Again, see 11.2.2 for more on this.

¹³ See Chapter 4, Section 4.3.1.



Counterfactuals: Kenaz defeats Amorites versus
Kenaz handed over to Amorites

only Kenaz. Should the required payment be death, God will not let that death destroy Israel. In this case, one is NOT responsible for the sins of others.¹⁴

Kenaz’ statements, like Abram’s, show his humility with regard to both God and the community. He embodies moral authority for the community because he trusts God but still acknowledges God’s freedom to act, even to the extent of risking his own life. He, like Abram, acknowledges that he is in a position of moral debt to God.

¹⁴ This is unlike the situation we find in *LAB* 45:6, where God is angry with the people for allowing Micah and Dedilah to lead some astray with their idols. In that case, those who allowed evil to happen are destroyed along with those who sinned. The difference appears to be based on the openness of the evil: if there’s some evil of which one is aware, then one is responsible.

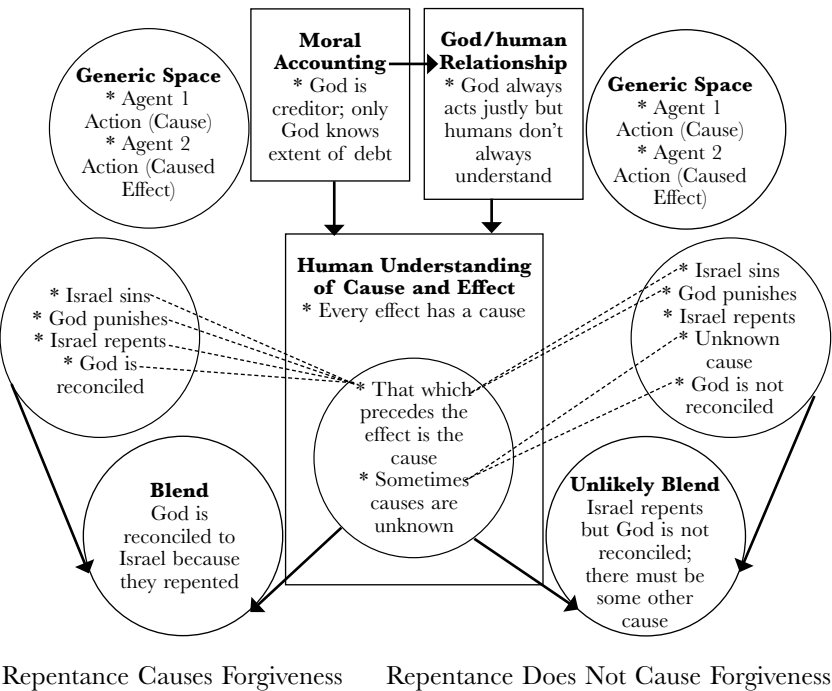
Kenaz further shows his humility by refraining from connecting his survival with the survival of the nation: he acknowledges the limit of his own importance and that the covenant is with the entire community, not just the leader.

9.5 DEBORAH

The story of Deborah is necessarily different from those of the judges who acted as military leaders. Hence we find the questions of humility and moral authority addressed differently than in the stories of male leaders.

In *LAB* 30:4, the people—who have been subjugated—state their belief that their sinfulness has caused their situation, which they see as punishment. They plan a fast in reparation. They close the communal lament by saying, *Et quis scit si replacabitur Deus hereditati sue, ut non disperdat plantationem vinee sue?* (Who knows, perhaps God will be reconciled with his portion so as not to destroy the plant of his vineyard.)

Their words introduce the following counterfactuals and some familiar cultural frames:



In this case, it is the people as a community who concede their sinfulness and God's freedom. They leave open the possibility that God will not be reconciled to Israel.

Deborah responds to their confession by telling them that God is favorably disposed toward them:

Et ecce nunc Dominus inviscerabitur vobis in hodierna die, non pro vobis sed pro testamento suo, quod disposuit patribus vestris et iuramento quo iuravit, ut non desereret vos usque in finem.

And behold now the Lord will be favorably disposed to you today, not because of you but because of his covenant that he established with your fathers and the oath that he swore not to abandon you forever. (30:7)

Deborah's certainty is very different from the hesitant hopes put forward by Abram, Amram, and Kenaz. Is she not making unacceptable assumptions, at least according to the worldview of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*?

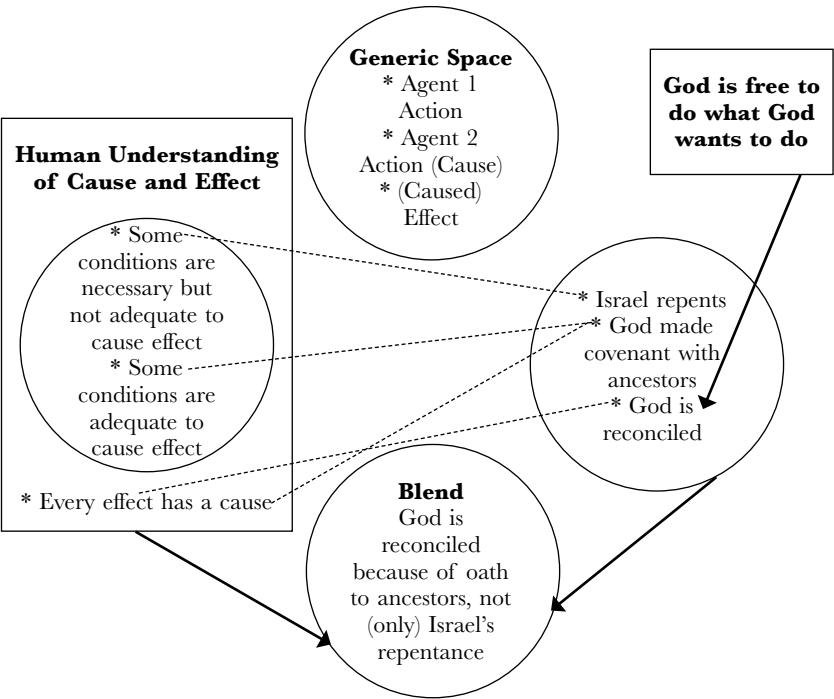
Deborah's assertion of God's reconciliation with Israel contains considerable nuance. God's forgiveness and restoration, according to Deborah, is not the direct result of their repentance. As the people acknowledged earlier, their actions do not dictate God's response. *Who knows, perhaps...* preserves God's freedom, but given that they view their sins as causal for their suffering, there is an underlying assumption that repentance should be causal for forgiveness.

Deborah introduces the real reason for God's clemency: God chooses to be bound by the relationship and commitments he made with the ancestors. The repentance of the community allows God to honor the covenant, but does not force God to do so.

Deborah's remarks provide a revision of the cognitive blend introduced by the people. In the schematic below, Deborah affirms that God is free, that their repentance is necessary but not sufficient, and that God will honor the covenant established with the community through their ancestors long ago.

Unlike Abraham and Kenaz, Deborah is not involved in personal risk in this situation, other than her status as a member of subjugated Israel. She is not facing the blast furnace or loss of her life in military battle. The question is not her own sinfulness but that of the community.

Unlike Amram, she is the designated leader, chosen to interpret God's word to the community. The community has not proposed a plan of action other than repentance, so there is no proposal to refute: there is only the future to frame.



Deborah's Revision of the Community's Cognitive Blends

Unlike Abraham, Amram, and Kenaz, Deborah does not project personal humility in this speech. She projects the opposite! *Perhaps* is the people's word; her words are definitive.

If one defines humility as being deferential or submissive, then Abraham, Amram and Kenaz are deferential and submissive to God and to God's assessment of them. But Deborah too is deferential to God and God's assessment of her. It is just that the assessment in question is not the same kind of assessment which the others experienced.

We know, from *LAB* 29:1, that women were not considered fit leaders in Israel.¹⁵ But regardless of the people's standards, God decides in

¹⁵ In a discussion about the dispersal of Kenaz' land, Zebul says, *Ecce nunc scimus omnem laborem quem laboravit nobiscum Cenez in diebus vite sue. Et nunc si filios habuisset, ipsi deguerant principari populo. Et quia filie supersunt, accipiant partem amplioem...* (Behold now we know all the toil that Cenez toiled for us in the days of his life. Now if he had sons, they should have ruled the people. Since daughters survive, let us give them a great portion.) (*LAB* 29:1). The implication is clear; daughters may not rule the people.

LAB 30:2 that Israel needs a woman ruler.¹⁶ Whether this is culturally acceptable or not, it is God's will.

Deborah's moral authority comes from her willingness to accept this abnormal role, which God has decided is appropriate. She does not shrink from taking clear and unequivocal jurisdiction over the community. She castigates them for their fleeting and flawed repentance, she corrects their evaluation of God's response, and she directs Barak to get up and gird his loins like a man and go to war.¹⁷

But if Deborah is deferential to God and God's assessment of her, how does she act as a ruler without being an affront to the community that has already declared that women cannot be rulers? We know already that her use of multiple references to the prophets, and the ability to re-interpret common biblical metaphors help establish authority. But this kind of authority is seen in other rulers, too. Is there another kind of authority evoked by this re-telling?

At *LAB* 30.5 God states that a woman is going to "rule over" (*principatur*) over Israel. But *princeps* is not a word that Deborah uses to refer to herself. While she uses repeated imperatives to instruct the people in her last testament, she claims that her right to admonish (*moneo*) them comes from her role as a woman of God, and her power to enlighten (*illumino*) results from the fact that she is a member of the female sex.¹⁸ She tells the people to obey (*obaudite*) her as one obeys a mother¹⁹—and

¹⁶ God, speaking of Israel's past election and present dereliction in *LAB* 30.5, declares that he will rouse up their enemies. When subjugated, Israel will repent, *Et principabitur eis mulier, que illuminabit eos quadraginta annis*. (And their ruler will be a woman, who will enlighten them for forty years.) And later, after 7 days of fasting, we learn, *[M]isit eis Dominus septima die Debboram que dixit ad eos*. (God sent to them on the seventh day Deborah, who spoke to them.)

¹⁷ *LAB* 31.1 reads, *Surge et preceinge lumbos tuos tamquam vir, et descende et expugna Sisaram*...

¹⁸ Jacobson (*Commentary*, 831) points out that Deborah's claim as illuminator (which is supported by God's prediction in 30:2) may be motivated by the translation of *lapidoth* as torches, and that the Midrash built on this same connection. While Jacobson appreciates C. A. Brown's observations about the points of correspondence between *LAB*'s version of Moses and Deborah, he cautions against claiming too much. But one must point out that very few characters are "illuminators" in *LAB*: God, Moses, Deborah, and Samuel. One must believe that the author had no qualms about admitting a woman to this august class, and that fact in itself should be of interest to us. And since we know with what freedom Pseudo-Philo interpreted, if the author did not wish to make use of the possibility inherent in the biblical text, it is reasonable to assume that she or he would not have.

¹⁹ Which, of course, raises the question, what kind of obedience to mothers was required? At any rate, this portrayal of Deborah as a "mother" is non-biblical, and according to Halpern-Amaru, reflects Pseudo-Philo's pervasive pattern of associating

to attend to (*intendite*) her words, because someday they too will be in the situation she is in: dying.²⁰

Both *moneo* and *obaudite* are used in Deborah's first speech, where she notes at *LAB* 30.5 that the people did neither when Moses, Joshua, Kenaz, and Zebul were alive and instructing them. In her last testament, she echoes the words of the prophets, showing again her position vis-à-vis the community.

At the close of Deborah's last testament—*LAB* 33:3—she refers once more to her close relationship with Israel, “my children” and returns to the imperative: obey (*obaudite*) my voice while you have life.

Deborah's final speech builds a cognitive blend between ruler and mother, the result of which is Deborah herself! But she is very careful never to use the title about herself; instead, she grounds her authority in the homely metaphor “mother.”

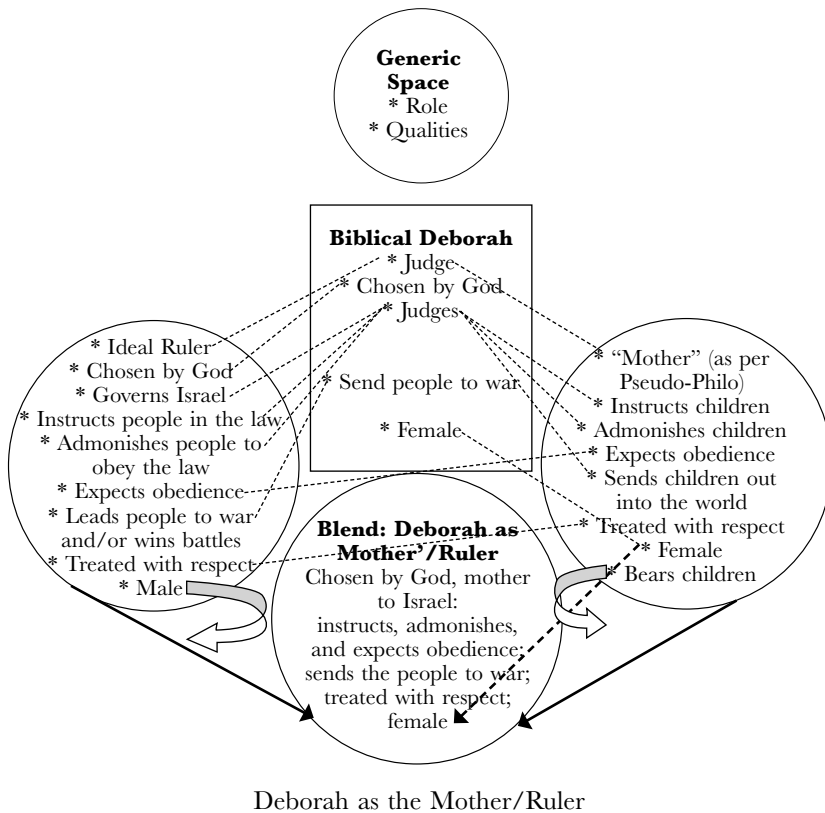
In Pseudo-Philo's eyes, Deborah's status as a woman of God and a mother to Israel is sufficient justification to demand obedience and the right to admonish and instruct. Her authority does not result from traditional categories of (male) gender, heredity, riches, or military prowess and power, but rather from the clever melding of the qualities of motherhood with the qualities of a ruler. Although God recognizes her as a ruler, Pseudo-Philo ingeniously avoids using the title when speaking of Deborah, thereby avoiding the most difficult of the dissonances between the two inputs.²¹

Because Deborah does not claim the title of ruler, even though God has named her as one, she exhibits another kind of moral authority. Pseudo-Philo grounds her call in the modest relationships of daily life. In this way, Deborah can show that the ordinary interactions of daily life are as instructive for the survival of the community as are the big wars and triumphs. The blend has multiple effects: Deborah's leadership (as told in the biblical version) is changed by the input of mother added by Pseudo-Philo, but so too is the input of mother changed by being blended with the ideal ruler. Motherhood, through the revision of Deborah in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, has taken on added authority.

“all strong female characters...one way or another with motherhood.” (“Portraits of Women in Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities*,” 106.)

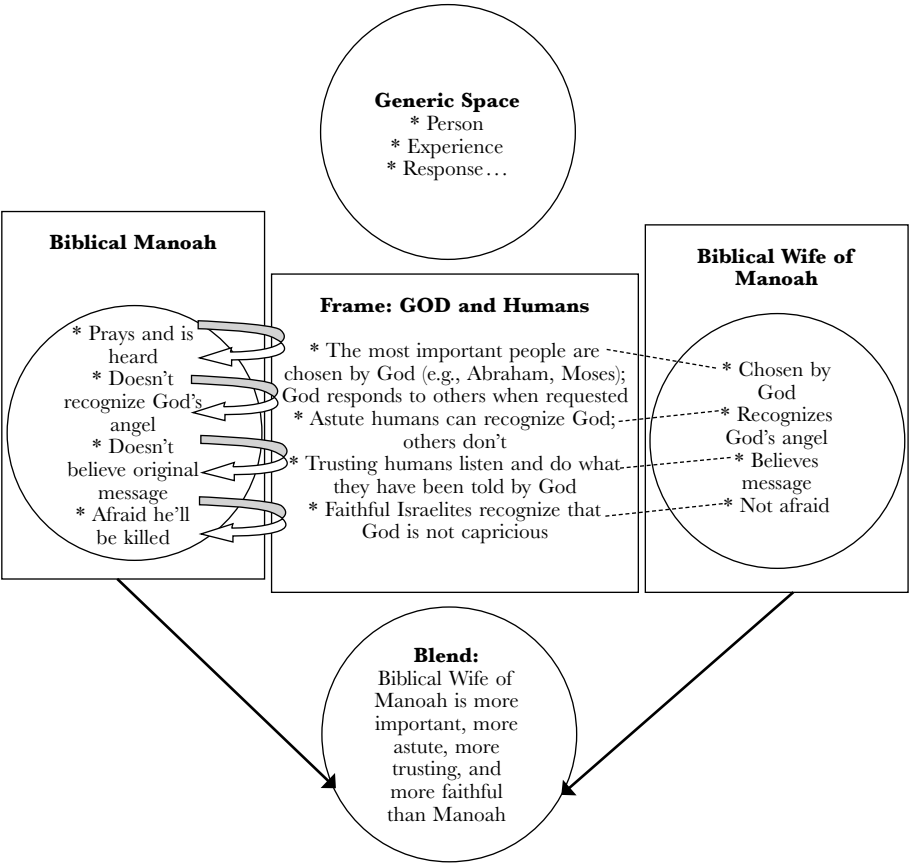
²⁰ These Latin imperatives are all found in *LAB* 33.1.

²¹ Which result, of course, from the cultural difficulty with female leaders.



9.6 ELUMAH

Elumah is Pseudo-Philo's name for the mother of Samson and wife of Manoah. In the biblical text—Judges 13:2–25—she is unnamed and barren, but an angel appears to her and tells her that she will have a son. She is charged to drink no wine and eat nothing unclean, and told that the boy shall be “separated” for God from birth. She tells her husband of the visit; Manoah then entreats God to send the angel back and educate them about what to do with the boy. The angel comes again to the wife, who runs to find her husband, and the angel repeats his instructions—but they are still directed to her, not him. Manoah invites the angel to eat; the angel refuses but invites them instead to make a burnt offering. He then disappears in a flame from the offering. Manoah panics, because he finally believes it was God's messenger. But his wife assures him that if they were to die, God would not have accepted their



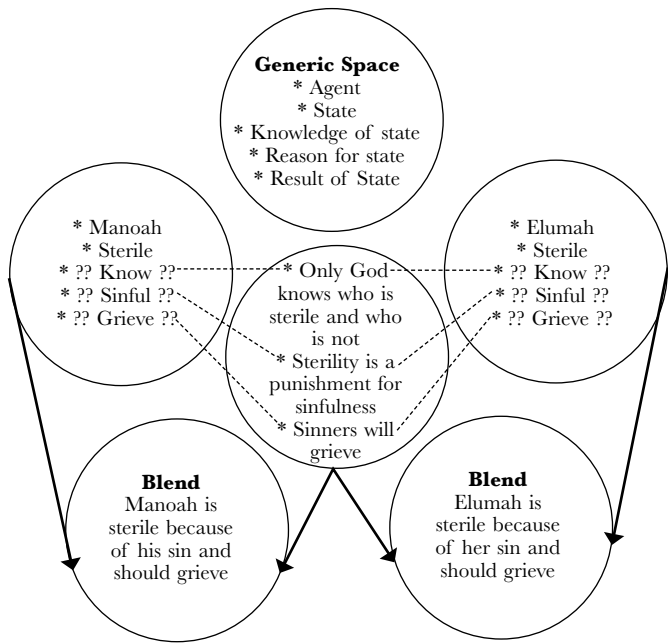
Comparing biblical Manoah and his wife

offerings or showed them what was to happen. The section closes with the announcement of Samson's birth and growth in the Lord.

If one used a cognitive analysis for this text, we would see that Manoah does not fare well in relationship to his wife. She is clearly chosen while he has to petition God for information; she is more astute, more faithful, and more trusting. This is not a flattering text for the husband.

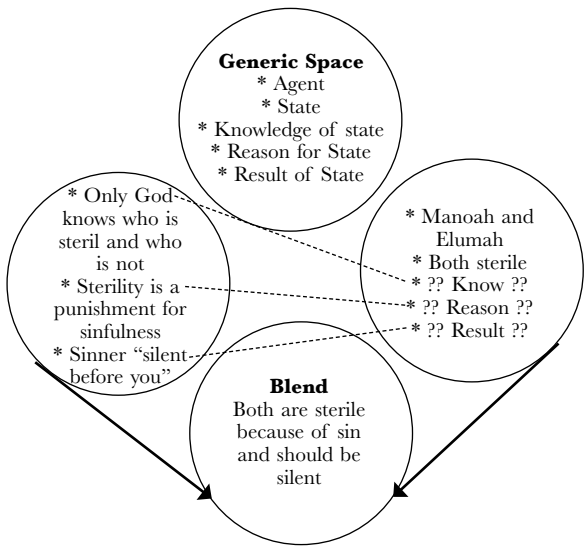
Pseudo-Philo's revision begins by portraying Manoah and Elumah engaged in daily arguments over whose fault it is that they are without children. Manoah accuses Elumah of sterility and asks for permission to take another wife; she argues that he's the problem.

One night Elumah goes up to the roof and prays to God for guidance about the situation. She says,



Counterfactual 1: Manoah sterile

Counterfactual 2: Elumah sterile



Counterfactual 3: Both sterile

Ecce tu Domine Deus totius carnis, utrum viro meo aut mihi non sit datum procreare filios revela mihi, vel cui prohibitum sit, aut cui concessum ut faciat fructum, ut cui prohibitum est ingemiscat in peccatis suis, quia manet sine fructu, vel si ambo fraudati sumus, et hoc revela nobis, ut peccata nostra sustinentes taceamus coram te.

Behold, Lord God of all flesh, reveal to me whether it has not been granted to my husband or to me to produce children, to whom it has been forbidden and to whom it has been allowed to bear offspring, in order that the one who is forbidden may groan over his sins because he remains without offspring. Or if both of us have been deprived, reveal this to us also so that we might bear our guilt and be silent before you. (*LAB* 42:2)

Elumah's prayer introduces three counterfactual possibilities: that she is sterile and Manoah is not; that Manoah is sterile and she is not; and that both of them are sterile. Each possibility also dictates an appropriate response: since sterility is the result of sin, the sinful one has to groan/grieve, bear their guilt, keep silence before God. This is in keeping with the cultural frame of sterility, which considered barrenness not just a cause for sorrow but a punishment from God. Elumah is willing to concede that she may be the one who is barren and has therefore sinned; for her, even that painful knowledge is preferable to continuing the fight.

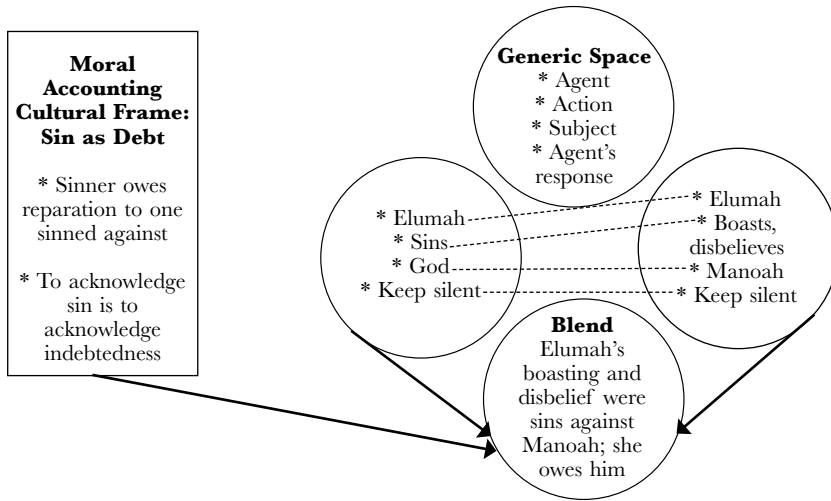
God's answer to Elumah in *LAB* 42:3—which comes from an angel sent in the morning—solves the question: Elumah is the barren partner, not her husband. But her prayer has been heard, and her repentance and grief deemed sufficient. She will conceive. Elumah receives instructions about the child's name and his diet and a prediction of his importance to Israel.

Elumah runs to her husband and says to him,

Ecce ego appono manum meam super os meum, et ero tacens ante te omnes dies, propter quod gloriata sum in vano, et non credidi verbis tuis. Angelus enim Domini venit ad me hodie, et manifestavit mihi dicens: Eluma tu es sterilis, sed concipies et paries filium.

Behold, I put my hand over my mouth, and I will be silent before you always because I boasted in vain and did not believe your words. For the angel of the Lord came to me today and informed me, saying, 'Elumah, you are sterile, but you will conceive and bear a son.' (*LAB* 42:4)

Elumah's pronouncement transfers her promises—to groan over (*ingemisco*) her sin and to keep silence (*taceo*) before the one against whom she has transgressed—from God to her husband. Her admission is the groaning; her silence is to come.



Elumah's Stature in Relation to Manoah

Elumah's sins are not small offenses. For Pseudo-Philo, boasting (*glorior*) is virtually always negative.²² Neither is disbelief (*non credo*) a positive trait. Disbelief in God is punishable by death;²³ and when Amram does not believe Miriam at 9:10, he is unable to respond to the elders' later accusations because he put no credence in her vision. Amram's disbelief encompasses God—who sent the vision—as well as his daughter.

Elumah's speech brings in the cultural frame of Moral Accounting once again, but this time sins are not just debits in one's account with God. Elumah also uses moral accounting to evaluate her relationship with Manoah. Elumah, conceivably, could have informed Manoah about her coming conception without confessing her boasting or disbelief. But by acknowledging them, she has placed herself in a position of debt to Manoah; she owes him for her transgressions. She has accepted this burden with no prodding on his—or God's—part.

²² Sisera's army boasts in his might at 31:1; Jael taunts Sisera to go boast before his father that he's been killed by a woman (31:7); no female can boast of twins in their third year like Rebecca (32.5); Hannah should not boast in her appearance (50:2); and Saul and the Medium of Endor should not boast that they brought Samuel up, because it wasn't their power (64:7). Only at 32:12 is boasting positive—Jael can boast among women, but then, she's not an Israelite. What is seemly for a foreign woman is not necessarily seemly for an Israelite.

²³ LAB 14:4.

Manoah immediately squanders some of his advantage in the marital duel at *LAB* 42:5 when he disbelieves his wife, thereby sinning not only against Elumah but also against God. But he redeems himself, at least in relation to God. Elumah has confessed her failings; now Manoah voices his fear of not being worthy to hear and see God's works.

Et non credidit Manue mulieri sue et confusus tristitia ascendit et ipse in solarario, et oravit et dixit: Ecce non sum dignus audire signa et prodigia que facit in nobis Deus, aut videre faciam missi.

Et factum est dum loqueretur verba hec, adiecit angelus Domini venire ad uxorem eius. Ipsa autem erat in agro, et Manue in domo sua. Et dixit ad eam angelus: Curre et clama ad virum tuum, quoniam dignatus est Deus, ut vocem meam audiat.

Manoah did not believe his wife, and being confused and sad he himself also went to the upper chamber and prayed and said, "Behold, am I not worthy to hear the signs and wonders that God has done among us or to see the face of his messenger?"

While he was speaking these words, the angel of the Lord came again to his wife. She was in the field, and Manoah was in his house. The angel said to her, "Run and summon your husband, for God has deemed him worthy to hear my voice." (*LAB* 42:5–6)

The blend here is quite obvious: Manoah asks, *Am I not worthy?* This introduces the counterfactual space where he may indeed be unworthy; but God immediately sends a messenger to say, *Yes, you're worthy.* Should the reader question Manoah's character—which is not hard to do, given that his biblical portrait is always present in the back of one's mind while reading this—we are told clearly that he's good enough for God, and hence for us.²⁴

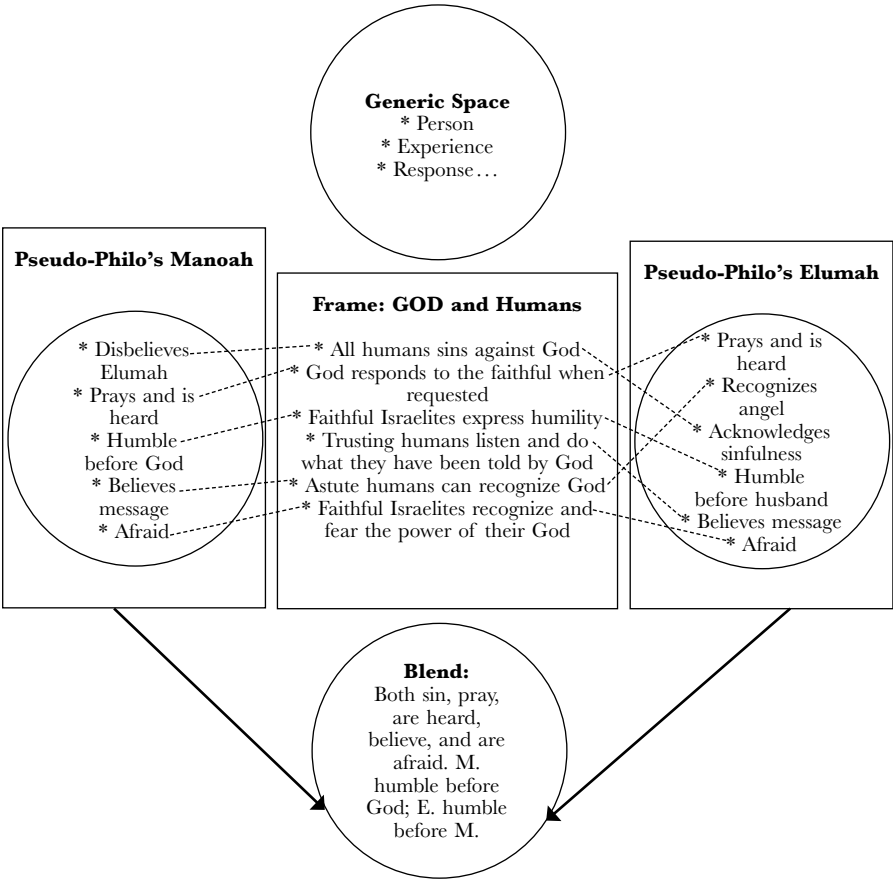
Manoah's discussion with the angel is also revised vis-à-vis the biblical version. In *LAB* 42:7, no longer does he ask for a repetition of the rules by which his son should live; instead, the angel initiates conversation and tells him, *Ingrederere ad mulierem tuam et facito omnia verba ista.* (Go in to your wife and do all these things.) Manoah responds by telling the angel to see to it that he too does what he's supposed to do. Going in to his wife—a common way to refer to sexual intercourse—makes it clear that Manoah is the father of this child.²⁵

²⁴ But not perfect, as witnessed by his disbelief.

²⁵ It's not hard to read the question of cuckoldry into the biblical version with its strange man who visits the wife unbeckoned and unbeknownst to her husband.

In the biblical version of the final scene, Manoah is overwhelmed with fear because, having seen the Lord, he expects to die. His wife lists for him all the reasons why his fear is unreasonable. But in Pseudo-Philo’s re-write, both Manoah and Elumah are overwhelmed; Elumah does not instruct her husband.

A comparison of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*’s version of this story to the biblical tale shows that Elumah and Manoah have moved from an unbalanced relationship—where God’s favor is freely bestowed on and recognized by Elumah but not Manoah—to a symmetrical relationship, where both display humility and are treated equally by God. Any hint of superiority on Elumah’s part is removed by her confession of sin before her husband; she is in debt to him morally.



Comparing Pseudo-Philo’s Manoah and Elumah

While Manoah and Elumah become virtual equals in this revision, there is one telling element that is not comparable between the two of them. Elumah's prayer makes it clear that she must have sinned against God, but she also confesses to and is respectful before her husband. He makes no reciprocal confession to Elumah, though he disbelieves her report of the visit from God's angel. Manoah is self-effacing only before God (who immediately declares him worthy).

In this re-telling, the character of Manoah is salvaged and reconstituted in a more positive light. He exhibits Pseudo-Philo's customary deference and humility before God, therefore placing himself in the category of a good person. But it is Elumah who accepts moral accountability for both her barrenness and her inappropriate behavior toward her husband. She, like Abraham, Amram, and Kenaz, recognizes the possibility of great sin in her life. Unlike them, she also confesses to domestic transgressions in order to restore the appropriate balance in the family; i.e., she is morally indebted to and therefore subservient to Manoah.

Elumah treats her husband exactly the same way that male characters treat God.

9.7 SEILA

At the beginning of this section, I asked whether the public example provided by Seila teaches the community anything other than blind obedience. In chapter four of this study, *Rhetoric Through A Cognitive Lens*, I explored the blends involved in Seila's opening statement to her father at LAB 40:2, *Et quis est qui tristetur moriens, videns populum liberatum?* (Who is there who would be sad to die, seeing the people free?)²⁶ I argued that an important part of understanding her argument is recognizing that she blends herself not just with a joyful member of the community celebrating Israel's victory, but also with a warrior who is willing to die for the sake of the people. As I noted just above in the discussion of Deborah,²⁷ when one combines two inputs in a blend, both are affected. In the case of Seila, the blending of young girl and warrior leaves both mental concepts slightly changed in the reader's

²⁶ See Sections 4.2.4, 4.2.4.1, and 4.2.4.3 in Chapter Four.

²⁷ Where I explored the cognitive association of motherhood and leadership.

mind. The reader now has a cognitive space where a young girl can adopt the selflessness and courage of a warrior.

Lest we miss the point, Seila goes on to compare herself with Isaac. As I have noted in the final section of Chapter Two, *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* clearly portrays her as another Isaac, a martyr whose death has expiatory effect for the community.

Finally, in the discussion of Jephthah in Chapter Eight, I have shown that Seila's offering of herself is best understood as a mental construction between a holocaust and a sin offering. But who is presenting the offering?

At *LAB* 40:4, God comments,

Et ipsam vidi magis sapientem pre patre suo et sensatam virginem pre omnibus qui hic sunt sapientibus. Et nunc detur anima eius in petitione eius, et erit mors eius preciosa ante conspectum meum omni tempore...

I have seen that she is wiser than her father and that the virgin is smarter than all the wise men who are here. Now let her soul be given up in accord with her request, and her death will be precious before me always.

It would appear that the sacrifice, at least in God's mind, happens because of Seila's request, not Jephthah's vow. And what is Seila's *petitione*, request? The previous verse tells us that she petitioned for time to grieve—not the loss of her life but the fact that her father was trapped by his vow.

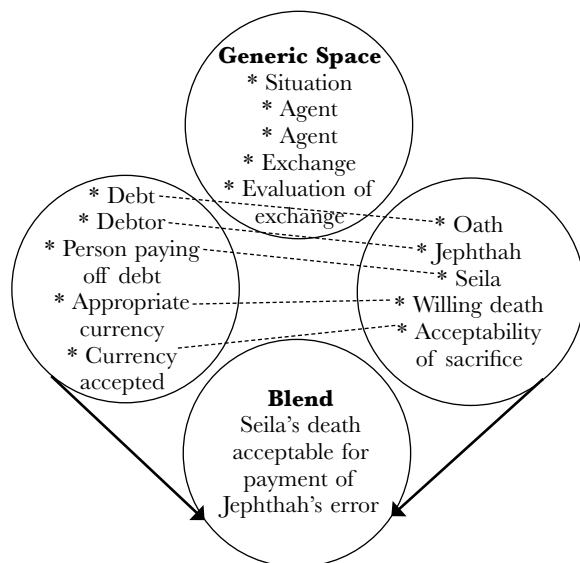
Et nunc omnia que orasti non destruas, sed fac. Unam autem petitionem peto a te antequam moriar, postulationem minimam exoro priusquam reddam animam meam: ut vadam in montes et permeem in collibus et perambulem petras, ego et convirginales mee, et effundam in eis lacrimas meas et referam tristitias iuventutis mee. Et plorabunt me ligna campi, et plangent me bestie campestres, quia non sum tristis in hoc quod moriar, nec dolet mihi quod reddo animam meam, sed quoniam in oratione preoccupatus est pater meus; et si spontaneam me non obtulero in sacrificium, timeo ne non sit acceptabilis mors mea, aut in vano perdam animam meam. Hec referam montibus, et post revertar.

Now do not annul anything you have vowed, but do it all. I make however one request of you before I die, a small petition I ask before I give back my soul, that I may go to the mountains and stay in the hills and walk among the rocks, I and my virgin companions, and I will pour out my tears there and tell of the sadness of my youth. The trees of the field will weep for me, and the beasts of the field will lament for me. For I am not sad that I am going to die nor does it pain me to give back my soul, but because my father was trapped by his vow. If I will not offer myself willingly for sacrifice, I fear that my death would not be acceptable and I would lose my life to no purpose. These things I will tell the mountains and afterwards I will return. (*LAB* 40:3)

Seila's statement about the offering is not limited to grief for her father's ensnarement. She makes an unambiguous connection between voluntary death and the acceptability of the sacrifice. Regardless of how she feels, she is going to die; but her willingness will mean that the sacrifice of her life will have purpose.

And what purpose is that? At least one purpose of her death is the expiation of her father's sin. But we should also consider that while God says the people will not be freed on his account, *pro eo*, it's not unreasonable to assume that their freedom is tied up with **her** account.

This question of accounts, and the value of one's life and death once again brings into play the cultural frame of Moral Accounting. According to Seila's speech, paying the debt is not enough. The debt must be paid with the correct currency.



Seila's Death as Viewed Through the Lens of Moral Accounting²⁸

²⁸ This diagram could also be displayed as a counterfactual, where one possibility includes the input of an unwilling death and the other the input of willing death. In both cases, though, death is assumed.

I would point out that in the schematic above, when we note that the debt is the oath, “oath” includes both the promise that Jephthah made to sacrifice the first one out of his house, as well as the payment that he owes because he made a rash promise.

At the cognitive level, the blends presented by Seila’s speech, her actions, and God’s assessment combine to portray Seila as a moral authority for the community. But hers is not the moral authority grounded in acknowledgement of sinfulness, like Abram or Kenaz. It would have been inappropriate for Pseudo-Philo to bring up the question of personal sinfulness, as it would have reflected on the portrait of Isaac as well. But more importantly, she need not admit her sinfulness because she is, as the sacrificial victim for her father’s imprudent vow, carrying his sinfulness. She needs none of her own.

Deborah demonstrated that motherhood confers the same ability and right to instruct as does leadership. Now Seila shows us that a young virgin can exhibit the courage of a young warrior.

Like Deborah, Seila’s moral authority is derived from her willingness to accept the role chosen for her by God. God clearly demanded her death, just as God demanded that Deborah lead the people. In the face of God’s desire, what anyone else thinks of the appropriateness of her sacrifice, or about the fact that a female views herself as a warrior or a peer to a patriarch, is irrelevant.

Seila frames her unfortunate situation as the kind of thing that happens to Israelite heroes, and she demonstrates to the community the appropriate conduct in the face of unjustified suffering and death. Seila reshapes herself from a powerless victim to a powerful offering. She shows the community that anyone, even a young virgin, can save Israel and its leaders.

9.8 HANNAH

In the biblical version of this story, Hannah is the wife of Elkanah who is taunted by her fertile rival wife for her barrenness. At the annual festival, her husband tries to cheer her up by asking whether he’s not worth more than ten sons to her. Hannah goes to the shrine and makes a vow to God that if she has a child she will dedicate him as a Nazirite. Eli, the priest of the shrine at Shiloh, assumes that she is drunk because her lips move but no sound comes out. She corrects his impression and tells him of her grief; he assures her that her vow

has been heard. Hannah goes home and bears a son in due time. That son, Samuel, is brought to the shrine after he is weaned, and dedicated to God. Hannah recites a lengthy poem about God's power and goodness, and Samuel is left in the care of Eli.

In Pseudo-Philo, Hannah is God-fearing from her youth. Like Elumah, Hannah's childlessness is the source of a great deal of skirmishing within the household, though her sparring partner is Peninnah, rather than her husband. *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* elaborates on their daily conflicts and Peninnah's taunting use of biblical themes.

At 50:3, Pseudo-Philo changes Elkanah's attempt to cheer Hannah from a question of the value of his love to a question of the value of her character: *Nonne meliores sunt mores tui super decem filios Fenenne?* (Is not your character worth more than the ten sons of Peninnah?)²⁹ After this, Hannah goes off to the shrine.

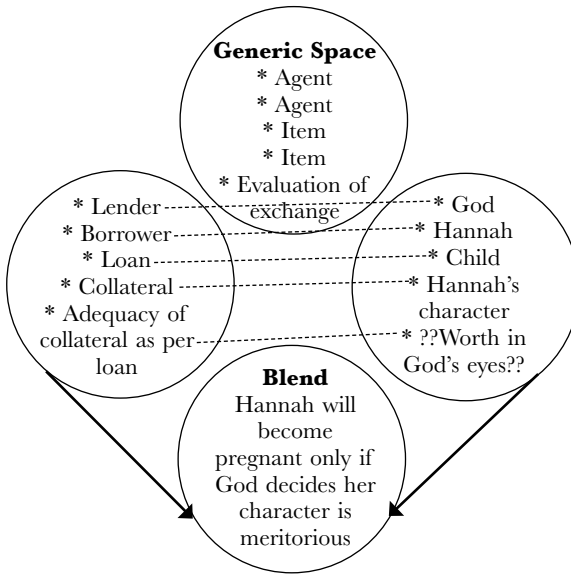
Et oravit Anna et dixit: Nonne tu Domine inspeculatus es cor omnium generationum, antequam plasmares seculum? Que autem metra aperta nascitur, aut que clausa moritur, nisi tu volueris? Et nunc ascendat oratio mea in conspectu tuo hodie, ne descendam inde vacua; quoniam tu scis cor meum, quomodo ambulavi in conspectu tuo ex die iuventutis mee.

Et noluit Anna orare clara voce sicut omnes homines. Tunc enim cogitavit dicens: Ne forte non sim digna exaudiri, et erit ut plus me zelans improperet mihi Fenenna sicut quotidie dicit: Ubi est Deus tuus in quo confidis? Et ego scio, quia non que in filiis multiplicatur ditata est, queque minorata est eguit, sed que habundat in voluntate Dei ditata est. Nam qui scierint quod oravi, si cognoverint quod non exaudior in oratione mea, blasphemabunt. Et non soli mihi erit testis in anima mea, quia minstre sunt orationum mearum lacrimae mee.

Hannah prayed and said, Did you not, Lord, examine the heart of all generations before you formed the world? Now what womb is born opened or dies closed unless you wish it? Now let my prayer ascend before you today so that I do not go down from here empty-handed, for you know my heart, how I have walked before you from the days of my youth.

Hannah did not want to pray out loud as all people do. For then she took thought, saying, Perhaps I am not worthy to be heard, and Peninnah in her envy of me will mock me more, just as she daily says, 'Where is your God in whom you trust?' I know that neither is the woman who has many sons rich nor is she who has few poor, but whoever abounds

²⁹ Perrot and Bogaert (Volume II, 214) raise the idea that the Latin *mores* should be replaced by *amores*. With Jacobson (*Commentary*, 1088) I think that it is more likely that *mores* was intended, as it fits with Hannah's portrait as a God-fearing Israelite woman.



Hannah's Prayer in the Frame of Moral Accounting

in the good will of God is rich. If anyone will know what I have prayed for and will learn that I am not heard in my prayer, he will blaspheme. My soul will not be my only witness, but my tears also will be, tears that are the ministers of my prayers. (*LAB* 50:4–5)

Hannah, like Elumah, recognizes that God is in charge of fertility. But Hannah focuses on piety first, not sinfulness. While acknowledging God's power and freedom, she reiterates that she's been dedicated to God since birth.

In the second part of her prayer, Hannah addresses the question of worthiness. She recognizes that God might not answer her prayer because she is not worthy, *non digna*, to be heard. She invokes the scheme of Moral Accounting; but rather than pay a debt, Hannah wishes to ask for a loan.

Hannah's question about her own worthiness also introduces the possibility (a counterfactual pair) that Peninnah could interpret her childlessness as a sign that Hannah's God is absent; or, in the frame of moral accounting, that Hannah's God is not wealthy enough to loan her the money.³⁰ The fact that someone might interpret an unanswered

³⁰ Notice the interplay of words about wealth, money, riches, etc. in this verse.

request as a sign of God's weakness or incapacity, and hence blasphemy, is Hannah's rationale for her silent prayer. Hannah knows better: she recognizes that God's good will is the ultimate wealth. But she does not trust that others—and in this case, others who worship the same God!—will know this.

In this section, Hannah, like Elumah, takes the responsibility for barrenness on her own shoulders. She accepts that her prayer might not be answered because of her unworthiness; in this she classes herself with Abram and Kenaz. And like Amram, her "perhaps" preserves God's freedom.

In *LAB* 51, Hannah brings Samuel to the shrine and recites a new version of the hymn found at 1 Samuel 2. While the song still emphasizes God's power and concern for the needy, it begins with a triumphant cry that all should listen to her. At verses 3 and 4, Hannah sings,

Venite in voce mea omnes gentes, et intendite allocutioni mee omnia regna, quoniam apertum est mihi os ut loquar, et labiis preceptum est ut hymnizem Domino. Stillate mamille mee et renunciate testimonia vestra, quia preceptum est vobis lactare!...

Et ideo loquar aperte verba mea, quoniam ex me exsurget constitutio Domini et omnes homines invenient veritatem.

Attend to my voice, all you nations, and listen to my speech, all you kingdoms, because my mouth has been opened that I should speak and my lips have been commanded to sing praise to the Lord. Drip, my breasts, and relate your testimonies, because you have been commanded to give suck!³¹...

And so I will speak my words openly, because from me will arise the ordinance of the Lord, and all will find truth.

Here Hannah steps out of the role of humble petitioner and proclaims that she has the right to lecture the entire world on the Lord's laws and ways. This is no retiring woman like Elumah who puts her hand over her mouth and says she will never speak in front of her husband again. She has thrown off her fear of troubling others by her open speech. Hannah, like Deborah, claims that the role of motherhood is the source of her authority; the dripping of her breasts will instruct the community. Because she has given birth to the one who was prophesied, she is a designated teacher for Israel.

³¹ As Antoinette Clark Wire points out in *Holy Lives, Holy Death: A Close Hearing of Early Jewish Storytellers* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002), 62, who but a woman would shout this?

And what does Hannah teach? In the midst of a song of praise and thanksgiving, Hannah interjects an explanation of God's view of life and death. The Lord has absolute freedom to bring to life and to kill, she says.³² The unjust will perish; the just will endure until the world's end. In the end, God's plan and power will be revealed. What one sees now is not complete.

9.9 SUMMARY: LEADERSHIP AND HUMILITY

In this survey, only Deborah, Seila, and Amram do not speak of their own probable sinfulness. Deborah does not need to: she is addressing the people who have already confessed, and her role is to remind them of God's mercy. Seila does not speak of sinfulness because she is the scapegoat for her father. Amram acknowledges that his plan could be wrong (and cause great suffering).

The other characters all come clean freely. Hannah allows that she might not be worthy; Elumah apologizes to her husband as well as confessing to God. Both Abram and Kenaz admit the possibility that their sins merit death.

One kind of "humility," then, is based on the acknowledgement of one's own sinfulness and God's infinite freedom. Abram, Kenaz, the people in Deborah's time, Elumah, and Hannah all acknowledge the possibility that what they want is not what God wants, and that their sins could be the problem. All of them take risks—of their lives or their desires—in order to prove their faithfulness. But it is worth noting that anyone who confesses his or her sinfulness, and affirms God's freedom, does not suffer God's wrath.

Closely related to this is Amram's humility that acknowledges God's power and recognizes that doing what you think is right is no guarantee

³² *Quia Dominus mortificat in iudicio, et vivificat in misericordia. Quoniam iniqui sunt in hoc seculo, et vivificat iustos cum vult. Iniquos autem concludet in tenebris nam iustis conservat lumen suum. Et cum mortui fuerint iniqui tunc peribunt, et cum dormierint iusti tunc liberabuntur. Sic autem omne iudicium permanebit, quosque reveletur qui tenet. (LAB 51:5)* For the Lord kills with righteous judgment, and brings to life with mercy. For the unjust exist in this world, but he brings the just to life when he wishes. The unjust he will shut up in darkness, but for the just he saves his light. And when the unjust have died, then they will perish; but after the just have slept, then they will be delivered. So will every judgment endure, until he who holds power be revealed.

of God's approval. But again, confession seems to guarantee that one will not be punished.³³

If Deborah and Seila show humility, it is a humility grounded on assuming the role for which God has ordained you, regardless of the appropriateness of the role in other's eyes.³⁴ Both are clearly chosen by God for their roles, which are not "normal" for females. Seila not only gives her life, but she risks humiliation when she claims the connection between herself and Isaac.

Hannah opens herself up to the same kind of shame when she instructs the nations. In these cases, where the character steps outside of tradition, Pseudo-Philo goes to great lengths to show how their authority is consonant with traditional female roles: mothering, nursing, being a young virgin.

Based on these analyses, I would argue that there is not just one way of being an authority in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. Every leader takes risks. But people who aren't leaders take risks too. Both kinds of examples are important because humility is necessary for both private and public life. Sometimes the risk entails one's life; other times the risk entails one's reputation. In either case, one needs to trust that God has it all in hand, and that one can only play one's part.

9.10 THE NATURE OF HUMAN NATURE

Most commentators remark on *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*'s enhanced sense of human sinfulness. As Murphy says, in Pseudo-Philo's re-telling Israel is "more consistent in disobedience than obedience."³⁵ Jacobson makes the point that God, who is always and everywhere in complete control, does not let disaster descend upon the people randomly; it is always a punishment for wrongdoing.³⁶ But if one is interested in the ideology as well as the theology of the text, then it is not just the fact of amplified human evil that is important, but how Pseudo-Philo goes about expressing this tendency.

³³ Amram is like Abram in that both make a choice that puts them at the mercy of the "people of the land," just as Tamar put herself at the mercy of Judah. But these two men acknowledged that their debt was to God, not to the people.

³⁴ LAB 20:2–3 shows Joshua experiencing the same kind of "stepping into" authority upon God's instruction, although one learns later that he was chosen because of his faithful behavior years before.

³⁵ Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo*, 231.

³⁶ Jacobson, *Commentary*, 242–44.

In the following section, I will examine the ways that the cognitive blends in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* construct a portrait of humanity, and what that representation could have meant for the reading audience of Pseudo-Philo's time.

In Chapter Two, I used the metaphor ISRAEL IS IRON—from Deborah's speech at *LAB* 30:6—as an example of a single scope blend, and noted how the blend results in a portrait of Israel as innately non-responsive to God. In this particular blend, humanity no longer has volition to choose obedience or disobedience—iron's natural state of hardness is mapped to human disobedience, and the ability or desire to be obedient is omitted from the blend. Israel is naturally disobedient and unable to change, according to this metaphor.

Immediately after this analysis in Chapter 2, I explored the double scope blend found in *LAB* 28:4. Here God compares Israel to a recalcitrant vine that refuses to yield fruit to its caring gardener. In this blend, too, the issue of human volition comes into play. But instead of showing how the innate nature of a substance can overpower the human capacity to choose good (as in the metaphor ISRAEL IS IRON), this blend shows how the innate tendency of a plant to flourish is superseded by Israel's repeated apostasy. In the first instance, human volition is omitted from the blend in order to prove that Israel cannot help but backslide; in the second, human nature over-rides plant nature in the blend in order to underscore Israel's propensity for evil. No matter how one gets there, one arrives at the same conclusion: Israel can't be anything but disobedient.

In *LAB* 28:5, the whole community responds with grief to the image of humanity as the disobedient plant. They wail in great lamentation saying, "Will the shepherd destroy his flock for no reason, unless it has sinned against him?" (*Numquid in vano perdet pastor gregem suum, nisi perpeccaverit ei?*)

This short line brings to mind the metaphor of God as slaughtering shepherd, analyzed in Chapter Seven. This trope, found in Deborah's opening speech, also shows the people as the sheep awaiting death. In this version—skewed in Pseudo-Philo's inimitable way—the reason for impending death is overt: the sheep have sinned.³⁷ Once more, the question of volition figures prominently in the blend. Any reader would know that while sheep do have the ability to choose whether to

³⁷ Unlike the metaphor in 30:5, where sin figures into the final blend but is not stated explicitly.

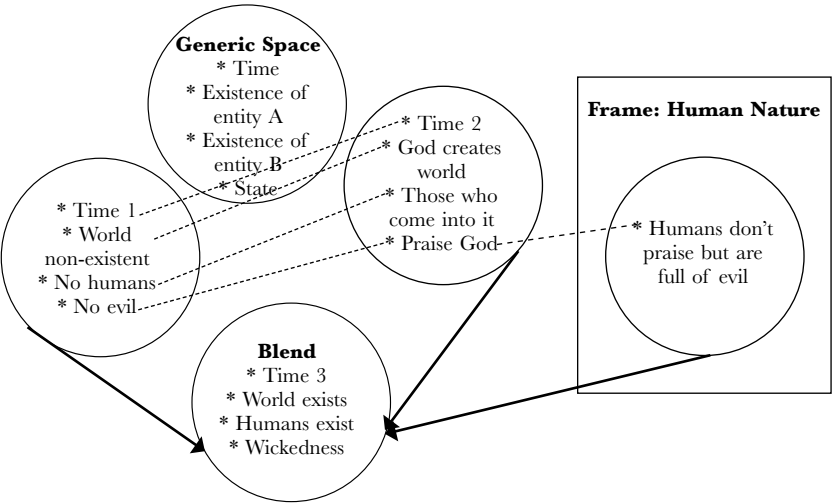
go down hill or up hill to find grass, are famously insensible to danger, and noted for their woolly stupidity, none of these is the conscious choice of sinful behavior. This purely human trait is an addition to the blend of this metaphor.

But we don't even need to examine metaphors in order to assess the nature of humanity. Immediately before this reference in 28:4 to Israel as a plant, God says,

Sed memor temporis illius quod fuit ante secula, in tempore quo non erat homo et iniquitas non erat in eo, cum dixi ut fieret seculum et laudarent me qui venturi errant in eo.

But I will recall the time that was before the world, the time when man did not exist and there was no wickedness in it, when I said, "Let the world be created and those who come into it will praise me."

This short phrase introduces a cognitive blend where humanity is liable for all iniquity in creation. But if we were to try to map those two short sentences, they do not make a sensible blend unless one adds to them the assumption that humanity is by nature evil.



God's Understanding of Human Nature

There is no arguing that *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* believes humanity to be anything other than naturally evil. This conclusion is no surprise to the commentators and students of this text. But what is surprising—and interesting—is how Pseudo-Philo chooses to have her leaders work with this basic assumption. If humanity is by nature evil, then there is—logically—no hope for redemption ever. Yet time and again we find some sense of redemption in this text. Is survival dependent solely on God’s mercy? Is there no human agency in this relationship at all? Were the only good Israelites the old dead Israelites?

While the metaphors analyzed would tell us that it is only God’s mercy that saves Israel, I would argue that the stories of the leaders give us a different view.

If we return to the text, we find that in Chapter 23 Joshua lays out God’s covenant to the people. After reciting the list of all the things that God did for the people—beginning with Abraham and Sarah, God’s covenant with Abraham, the birth of Isaac, and his sons, the descent to Egypt, the exodus, the giving of the Law, and the giving of the land—Joshua tells them what God has planned for the future.

Et nunc, si vos obaudieritis patres vestros, apponam cor meum in vobis in sempiternum et obumbrabo vos, et non apponent inimici vestri expugnare vos . . . Et ideo plantabo vos tamquam vineam desiderii, et regam vos tamquam gregem amabilem.

And now, if you heed your forefathers, I will pay attention to you forever and protect you, and your enemies will subdue you no more . . . And so I will plant you like a delightful vine and shepherd you like a lovable flock. (*LAB* 23:12)

In this speech, God makes a clear connection between heeding the forefathers and God’s care. During one’s lifetime, one will be treated as a delightful vine and a lovable flock; after death, we learn in the next verse, the faithful will rest in peace until they are restored, along with their ancestors.

Of course, it is at the end of the reign of the very next leader, Kenaz, that we learn that the people are a spiteful, rather than delightful, vine, and a flock so bad that God is inclined to slaughter them rather than love them. They have not heeded the forefathers. They throw themselves on God’s mercy and trust that they will be spared.

It may seem obvious, but God can’t be merciful if the people aren’t looking for mercy. In Deborah’s speech to the people in the beginning of Chapter 30, she agrees with the people that they are sinful, and goes on to pound it into their heads just how sinful. They ignored the wonders

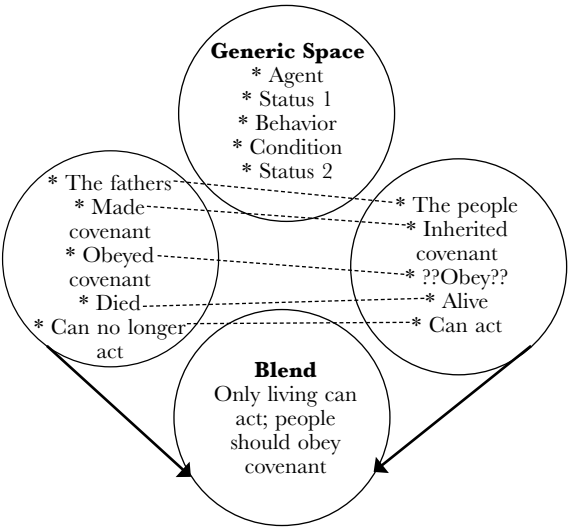
that God did for them, disobeyed the prophets, and forgot everything that they had been taught. Still, God will be favorably disposed to them—because of the covenant. As I argued in the examination of Deborah’s character in Chapter Nine, the people’s repentance is a necessary though not sufficient precursor to their rescue. On its own, it’s not adequate. But without it, God has no reason to be merciful.

The dead fathers—and the guarantees given to them—are not enough, either. This is clear when we look at Deborah’s valedictory. At 33:5, she says,

Adhuc vivens homo potest orare pro se et pro filiis suis, post finem autem non poterit exorare nec memor esse alicuius. Propterea nolite sperare in patres vestros. Non enim proderunt vobis, nisi similes inveniamini eis.

While a man is still alive he can pray for himself and for his children, but after his death he cannot pray or be mindful of anyone. Therefore do not put your trust in your fathers. For they will not profit you unless you are found to be like them.

As dead people, the fathers can no longer act or intercede for themselves or their children. The people should be “found to be like them”—that is, like the faithful fathers were when they were alive. Since Deborah has told us earlier (30:7) that God established the covenant with the fathers, it is reasonable to assume that it is their faithfulness that should be imitated. After all, dead is dead, alive is alive, and only the living can act. So the people must act, and act correctly.



Deborah’s Instructions to Community

In earlier sections of this chapter, I have argued that in God's eyes, human agency does have a part to play in the redemption of Israel. Yes, sinners are expected to confess their sinfulness. But the paramount moral leaders in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* not only confess, but then act according to their best understanding of the Law. The ideal leader in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is someone who does not use the promises to the fathers as some kind of guarantee, but who acknowledges the entire community's sinful nature, his or her own sinful nature, and then risks his or her life to live within their understanding of the Law. And when characters confess their sinfulness—Abram, Kenaz, Elumah, or Hannah—and affirm God's freedom to act, they never are abandoned by God.

The best leader is a sinner who acts out of good intentions. Like Tamar, they will be saved by their intentions.

CHAPTER TEN

WOMEN IN *LAB*: MOTHER KNOWS BEST

10.1 THE ISSUE AND THE ARGUMENTS

During the past decades, a number of commentators have attempted to address the unusual portrayal of women in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*.

In the Source Chretiennes series on Pseudo-Philo, Charles Perrot's theological analysis includes a section entitled *Le féminisme du Pseudo-Philon*. He noted that Pseudo-Philo seems "particularly solicitous to heighten the role of women." A long list of women who are portrayed positively comprises the majority of this short section (he does also remark on those few whose reputations seem to suffer) and Perrot noted that these portraits contrast with those provided later by the rabbis regarding "the weaker sex."¹

While Perrot raised the question, he ventured no further. The next serious discussion of women in Pseudo-Philo occurred 13 years later when Pieter Willem van der Horst argued that *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is unique in comparison to the bible and the post-biblical tradition. According to van der Horst, Pseudo-Philo frequently presents the most essential of his convictions through the mouths of women. He saw God's prediction that Deborah will rule over and illuminate (*illuminare*) Israel as a deliberate attempt to situate Deborah as the most important of the judges, similar to Moses. Seila is compared to Isaac and van der Horst states, that, "because Seila was indeed sacrificed, whereas Isaac was not, one feels inclined to say, 'Behold, something greater than Isaac is here.'"² Overall, van der Horst concludes that women are accorded

¹ «...Pseudo-Philon...semble particulièrement soucieux d'exalter le rôle des femmes: un rôle parfois douteux (12,3 et 18,13), mais généralement excellent, voire exemplaire...alors que par la suite les Rabbins eurent plutôt tendance à déprécier le sexe faible.» *Pseudo-Philon: Les Antiquités Bibliques*, Tome II, 52-3.

² Van der Horst, "Portraits of Biblical Women in Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*," 41.

a greatly magnified role in Israelite history in *LAB*, and he argues that one can correctly speak of the “feminism of Pseudo-Philo.”³

In Betsy Halpern-Amaru’s 1991 article, she revisits the question of women in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* and arrived at a different place than the men who preceded her. Halpern-Amaru sees her study as a “prolegomenon” for closer analysis, but argues that the changes wrought to the text’s women are by no means to be viewed in a totally positive light. She argues that although women function as instruments or active agents of God in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, even the independent females like Jael, Deborah, and Seila have been feminized and in some sense robbed of their autonomy. By “feminized,” Halpern-Amaru means that they are consistently viewed through the lens of the maternal role. “The maternal role—giving birth, nurturing, or chastising—is a major theme in [Pseudo-Philo’s] depiction of women.”⁴ She argues that Deborah, though drawn in the style of the male prophet-leader, is considered an inappropriate judge because of her gender, and that she speaks of herself as mother and female, not leader. Likewise Seila, who acts out the “wise son,” goes to great lengths to maintain her femininity. Hannah loses her initiative and with Elumah is re-shaped in the direction of piety; Jael misplaces her independence; and so it goes.

Halpern-Amaru concludes that although some women’s portraits in *LAB* are developed in ways similar to male heroes, Pseudo-Philo always makes a point of emphasizing what she calls their “femininity.” She argues,

... [A]ll strong female characters are associated in one way or another with motherhood, be it in the role of parent, villainess, or leader of Israel. Conversely, when the biblical story offers no context for a maternal characterization, Pseudo-Philo either underdevelops the portrait or portrays the woman as ineffective and dependent.⁵

In contrast to Halpern-Amaru, Cheryl Anne Brown’s 1992 book comparing the portraits of women in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* to those in Josephus and Philo concludes that women in this text are significant leaders in the life of the community. She notes that plac-

³ Van der Horst, “Portraits,” 142. Frederick J. Murphy repeats this remark in his *Pseudo-Philo* but provides no theory or reason for what he sees as Pseudo-Philo’s “truly noteworthy” interest in women. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) 258.

⁴ Halpern-Amaru, “*Women Like This: New Perspectives on Jewish Women in the Greco-Roman World*,” 105.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 106.

ing these amended portraits of women “within the framework of the biblical narrative...reflects [Pseudo-Philo’s] concern to authenticate and render authoritative his particular view of women.”⁶ She argues that Deborah is depicted as the feminine counterpart of Moses and becomes a personification of Wisdom for the people;⁷ that Seila not only corresponds to Isaac but that her death is symbolic for the destruction of Jerusalem.⁸ Hannah also becomes a Wisdom figure whose milk “nourishes...all of Israel” and her story becomes the paradigm for the story of Israel: “...[H]er crisis is their crisis, her longings are their longings, her fulfillment is their fulfillment.”⁹ Brown concludes that *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* most likely had its genesis in a charismatic community where women were held in high esteem.

Donald Polaski’s 1995 article on Tamar yanked the scholarly opinion back toward a more negative assessment of the women in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. I have analyzed his rhetorical arguments of the portrayal of Tamar in Chapter 4, Section 4.6, and will not repeat them here. But Polaski concludes that

...[S]imply characterizing women in ways which expand their roles or appear to praise them does not *necessarily* indicate a pro-woman bias in the text...[In the context of] an all-male discourse over the propriety of sexual relations...[Tamar’s] sexuality (and that of future female Israelites) becomes a problem. Her femininity is contained within the boundaries Amram sets up as surely as the men of Israel would have been contained by the boundaries the elders planned to establish. Tamar may find Pseudo-Philo to be a false friend.¹⁰

The last scholar to weigh in on the question of women in Pseudo-Philo is Howard Jacobson. In his two-volume commentary of over 1300 pages, he devotes less than a page to what he calls Pseudo-Philo’s feminist inclinations. While he finds the work of van der Horst and Brown interesting, he dismisses them as “well-intentioned but perhaps a bit generous.” In contrast, he reads Halpern-Amaru’s work as more balanced. His assessment of the situation is that “...most of the positive material about women in *LAB* essentially builds on biblical sources and

⁶ Cheryl Anne Brown, *No Longer Be Silent*, 218.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 82–3.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 126.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 171–72.

¹⁰ Polaski, *On Taming Tamar*, 99.

thus does not necessarily tell us much about *LAB* himself . . .” though he does note that the author was probably not a “‘male chauvinist.’”¹¹

It is reasonable for us to ask, *How can all these different interpretations result from the same text?* What is probably more helpful to ask, however, is *What did all these people read into the text to arrive at such different conclusions?*

One of the major difficulties with the discussion of women in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is the use of the words “feminist” and “feminism.” These words have tainted the conversation since the first time they were used. Since feminism is a 20th century cultural concept, it cannot possibly be an accurate appellation for a 1st century text. Hence it is easy to dismiss; one can toss around phrases like “male chauvinist” without having to seriously engage what the text does and does not say.

I would argue that the most accurate assessment of how Pseudo-Philo intended to portray women—which is indeed what all these scholars are arguing about, although none of them will make such a bold claim—can only be determined by revisiting the cognitive blends involved in the construction of their characters.

Let me begin first by refuting Jacobson’s notion that because that the positive material in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* builds on biblical sources, we cannot therefore ascertain anything about Pseudo-Philo’s opinions. This is a misunderstanding of how the narrative process—the conceptual blending process—works. Pseudo-Philo clearly felt comfortable picking and choosing among the sources available, and, one assumes, making things up when she wanted to. Including a positive source means that Pseudo-Philo agrees with the positive source. Great quantities of biblical material were deleted from this text, and unless we consider Pseudo-Philo to have lacked a coherent vision for her writing, we must assume that there was a reason behind the changes. Surely the consistent theology of the text belies any serious attempt to argue that the author found herself limited by her material.

Jacobson’s remark is in keeping with his general sense of Pseudo-Philo as an assembler, rather than an author. From his point of view, “[T]he contents of the book are so largely derivative that one tends to think of the author as the person who gave this work form rather

¹¹ Jacobson, *Commentary*, 251. Frankly, Jacobson does not seem to notice that there is something happening in Pseudo-Philo that is unlike other texts of its time. Probably the most insightful remark on the role of women that he makes in his short summary is the last sentence: “So the issue is surely not clear-cut.”

than substance.”¹² I think it is clear, through the analysis found in this study, that I disagree with this opinion. The marked difference between the way women are portrayed in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* and any other contemporary work should warrant more than a cursory review and dismissal; and any serious consideration of the text that does not take this anomaly into account has missed an important part of the analysis.

Though I abhor the inappropriate usage of the word “feminist”, I do believe that both van der Horst and Perrot were accurate in their assessment that the text is unusual in its treatment of women, and that this situation deserves a further look. I also find that Halpern-Amaru’s less excitable analysis has a good deal of truth in it; so too Cheryl Anne Brown’s constructions. I believe that Brown’s metaphoric interpretations—such as the use of Seila as a cipher for the fall of Jerusalem—are certainly possible readings, although I am not convinced that the text goes as far as she does. Polaski’s work is interesting but, as I indicated earlier, he has chosen to accentuate what Pseudo-Philo chose to ignore. It is a clever reading but not, I think, faithful to the text.

If then we were to analyze the blends of these scholars, I think we would find that Jacobson is using an input whereby anything that can be traced to the Bible need no longer be considered as an input to the author’s overall worldview (or, possibly, anything biblical which has to do with women). Both Perrot and van der Horst are using an input where the positive assessment of a woman calls up the cultural frame “Feminism”. Brown inputs several complex cultural frames based in prophetic and Wisdom texts, such as Jerusalem as the virgin daughter sacrificed for the good of the community. And Polaski inputs a modern cultural frame whereby women having sex outside of marriage are exercising their freedom. Halpern-Amaru does distinguish between the attribution of motherhood to a character and the simultaneous removal of autonomy (which she seems to define as acting without asking for direction from God) but she too misses the fact that blending motherhood into a character changes not only the evaluation of the character but also the evaluation of motherhood. In general, she seems to feel that re-visioning someone as a mother is a negative assessment.

It is absolutely and positively true that the vast majority of women in Pseudo-Philo are shaped to fit the image of mother, and that many

¹² Jacobson, *Commentary*, 195.

references to mothers, children, labor, and nursing are added in unexpected places. What none of the commentators have dealt with is what happens to the definition of “mother” when it is repeatedly blended in the way this text blends it.

10.2 LOCAL MEANING REVISITED: THE MEANING OF *MATER*

In Chapter 3, I explored the idea that one can create “local meaning.” I showed how, in chapters 25–28, the author uses the words “know” (*scio*) and “recognize” (*cognosco*) in contrast with each other, and how their local usage gave a distinct meaning to each, which helped shape the progression and theological points of the story.

I would argue that throughout the text of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, the author gives local meaning to the concept “mother”; or, to be more accurate, gives us a definition for “Good Jewish Mother.”

It is not the case that naming someone as “mother” shapes only that woman’s portrait. Calling someone by the name “mother” also changes the meaning of the word, because one is making a cognitive blend between the category and the specific instance. “Mother” as a central category is composed of the biological definition of mother—one who becomes pregnant, gives birth, and nurtures. But the repetition of certain inputs—the characteristics of the mothers described in this text—gives us a new working definition for the word. This new, or “local,” definition is active in one’s consciousness; the repeated pairing of this ordinary word with unusual inputs creates a new way of thinking about that word.¹³

Pseudo-Philo’s text is a document intended to instruct the Israelite community about who should be listened to, who knows how to interpret scripture, who is most like the prophets of old, and who has the humility, the perspicacity and the ability to lead. I believe that Pseudo-Philo would argue that you should listen to the women; the Jewish women who are, of course, good mothers as well as wives and daughters.¹⁴

¹³ This phenomenon is commonplace and invisible. For an illustration, consider the word, “alcoholic.” If you were raised by an abusive alcoholic father, you would have a very different understanding of that word than if the first alcoholic you knew was a white-haired grandmother who knit caps for the local cancer program and had been sober for 25 years.

¹⁴ Of course it’s not only the women who lead and instruct. But since in general the assumption was that women should not perform these roles for the community, the text

The way this works at a cognitive level is complex and dialogical. I will attempt to elucidate the blends made every time we read the word “mother” in the text; and then show how the accumulated definitions of specific mothers combine to give us a local definition. This process, of course, does not happen so neatly in one’s real mind. But it does happen.

Let me begin by reviewing the instances where Pseudo-Philo uses the word *mater* as an input. This word will always invoke a rich cultural frame. Though we may not be able to imagine just all that was contained in that frame at the time that *LAB* was written, it is safe to assume that the central category included the biological concept of a woman who becomes pregnant, labors, gives birth, nurses, and cares for a child.

10.2.1 *Tamar*

The first usage of *mater* is the description at 9:5 of Tamar, “our mother.” Cognitively, Tamar’s portrait as “our mother,” her statements against marriage to Gentiles¹⁵ and the remark that her intentions saved her are added to the biblical package of Tamar to construct one input which we would call “Pseudo-Philo’s Tamar”; the other input is the cultural frame “mother.” Together they yield the blend, “Tamar our mother.”

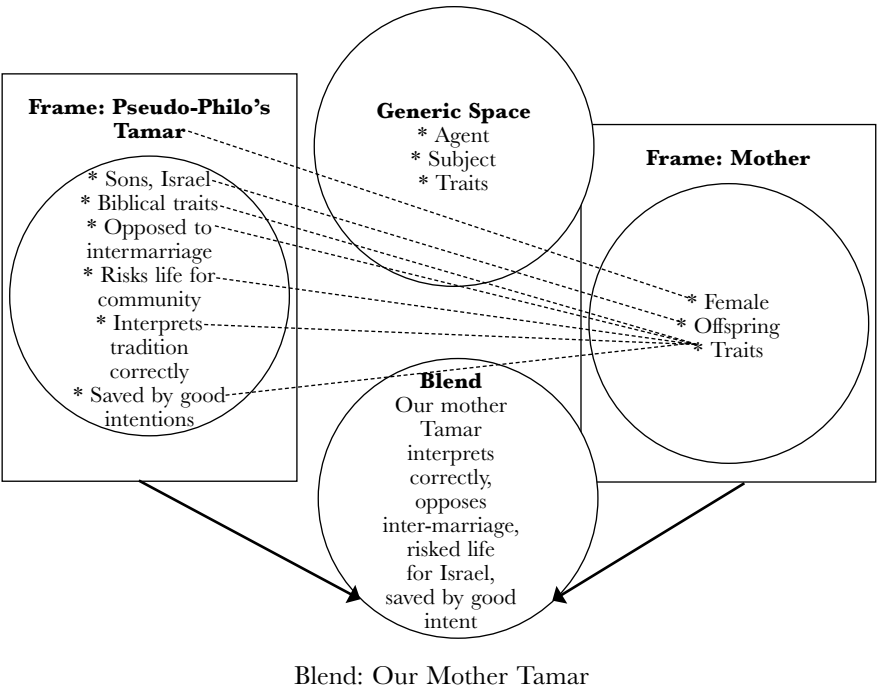
The image of mother that results from this citation is one of a person with good intentions who takes action and is willing to risk her own life to ensure the continuity of the community. While there is a biological component—Tamar did give birth to Perez and Zerah as a result of her tryst with Judah, and is therefore the ancestress of the people hearing this text—Pseudo-Philo emphasizes the actions that facilitated her parenthood. These include both her risky behavior with Judah and Pseudo-Philo’s interpretation of the reason behind that behavior: her desire to avoid intermarriage with a gentile and to remain a member of the Israelite community.

Also implied is the idea that one can be a spiritual as well as physical progenitor. “Our mother Tamar” is our mother not only because she gave birth to our ancestors, but also because she acted in a way that

will have to offer a strong alternative view. As does this monograph. The assumption is always and ever that women do not write or speak on behalf of the community.

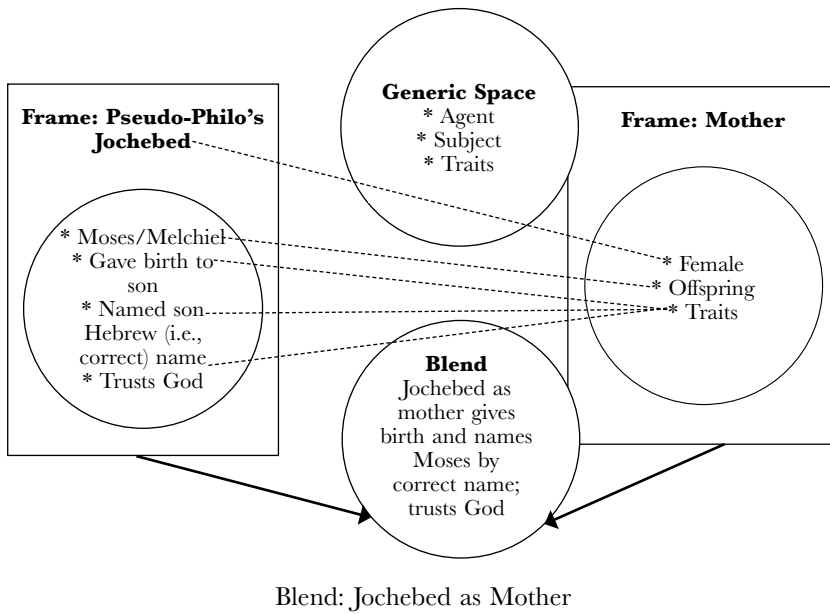
¹⁵ Van der Horst argues that she is the first person to raise this issue in *LAB* but she is actually just the first named person to do so. (See van der Horst, “Portraits,” 33.) The elders raise the issue in 9:2.

is a model for our own actions. We will explore this blend later in the discussion of Ruth and David.



10.2.2 *Jochebed*

Later in the same chapter, at 9:16, Jochebed gives birth to Moses. Moses, after his watery sojourn, is found by Pharaoh's daughter. She nurses the child and names him Moses; but Jochebed calls him Melchiel. This Israelite mother, unable to care for her child, still knows that child's correct name. She is privy to inside information and the name by which she calls him reveals her attitude towards God in this difficult time: My King is God. Jochebed's naming of Moses reveals her deep trust in God in a time of uncertainty.



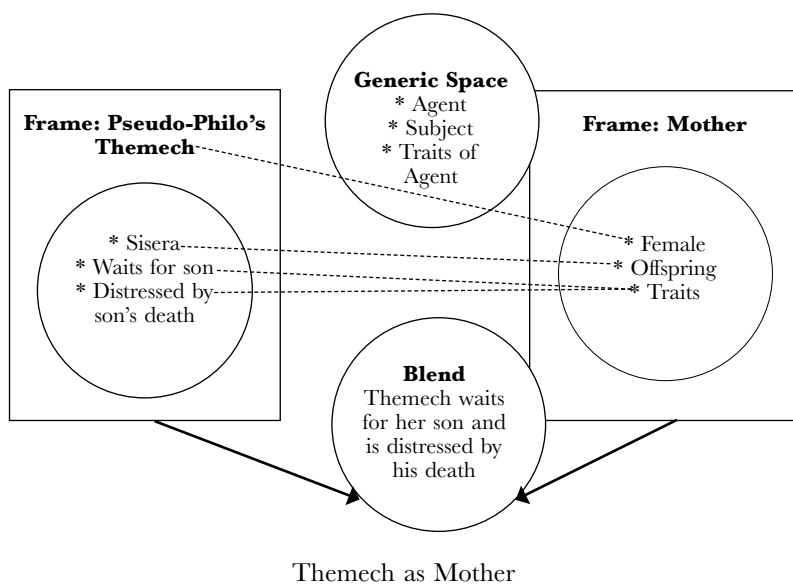
10.2.3 *Themech*

At 31:3, Sisera imagines being saved and going back to his mother, who is indeed—we learn later in the chapter—waiting for him. We actually have three different usages of *mater*, and hence three different blends. In the first, the perspective is that of a grown man, a ferocious warrior, who nonetheless longs for the comfort of his mother. Mother, in this case, is the home one always comes back to, no matter how brave and powerful. Later, we see Themech awaiting Sisera's return with her women; here she is the biological parent awaiting the return of an adult son from war with spoils. Still later, Barak's proclamation invites the reader to picture of her distress when Sisera's severed head is delivered: mother is the one grieving the untimely death of a child.

Sisera, of course, does not achieve the safety he longed for when he says in 31:3, "If I will be saved, I will go to my mother." (*Si liberabor, ibo ad matrem meam.*)

We can easily notice several points that the author is making. First, Sisera's mother has been named "Themech", reminding the reader of Cain's wife, who gave birth to an entire line of corrupt human beings. By name alone, Sisera's mother evokes evil.

And Sisera's plaintive yearning to go home is part of his overall portrait, a portrait of a valiant warrior who is gradually transformed



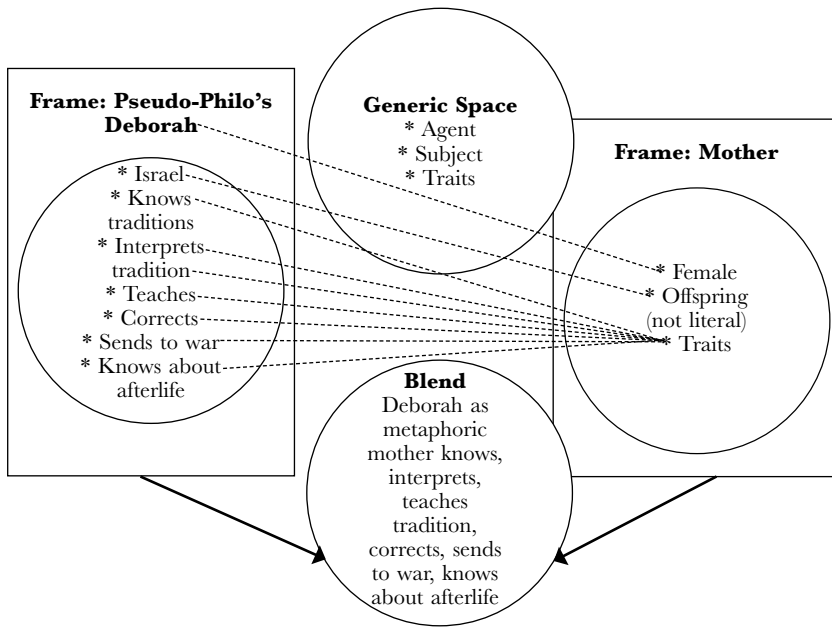
into a whimpering mess of a man who is killed by a woman and dies like a woman. So while this thought of his mother may just be the normal hunger of man who is at war and longs to be home, it seems more likely that it is offered as an insight into his real character: a frightened bully.

While Themech is not necessarily an exemplar of *LAB*'s understanding of a good mother, we can infer that the relationship between Themech and Sisera was one of mutual affection and devotion. In this example, even mothers and their malevolent grown sons share the bond of love. It would seem that reciprocal attachment between mother and child regardless of age and uprightness is an undeniable part of Pseudo-Philo's definition of motherhood.

Thus far, the blends probably feel a little more like the traditional view (or a central category) of mother. Even Sisera's mother is not too unfamiliar, though we may find the relationship between Themech and Sisera a little overdrawn. But *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is not just interested in mothers who fulfill the literal or traditional role, as we shall see as we go on.

10.2.4 *Deborah*

At *LAB* 33:1, Deborah's last testament, she calls herself mother, and the people repeat that appellation two times (33:4 and 33:6); several

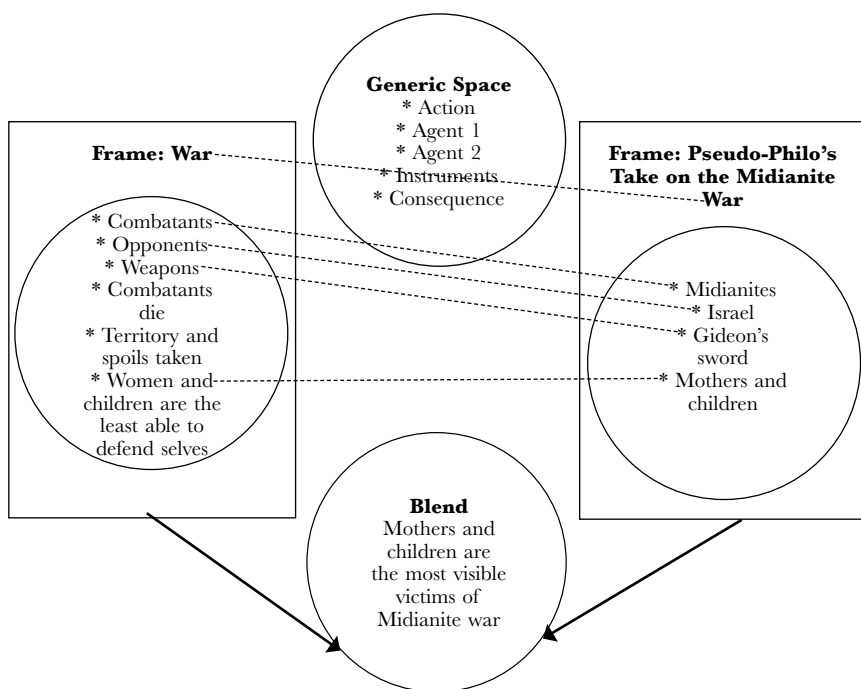


Deborah as Mother

generations later, when seven faithful men are threatened by Jair, they cite Deborah our mother as the one who instructed them to turn neither to the right or the left.

The portrait of Deborah in these chapters gives us a woman who interprets scripture, teaches accurately, castigates sinners, and calls the people to war. Deborah knows the entire story of God's relationship with Israel, and she teaches the people to obey the law, and argues that they cannot rely on the patriarchs to save them, but rather must conduct themselves as with the faithfulness shown by their ancestors. She leads the people with authority, and her influence lingers on long after her death.

By referring to Deborah repeatedly as mother, these individual characteristics are paired with the biological definition of mother already present in one's cognition. As far as we know, there is no biological basis for the term, and the author does not attempt to make any claims of that kind. Deborah is mother because she fulfills some role expected of a mother; we must look to what she does in order to determine what that motherly role is.



Blend: Mothers and Children as Victims of War

10.2.5 *The Midianites*

At *LAB* 36:1, the Midianites await the attack of Gideon. While waiting, they speak to each other about how the God of Israel has delivered them up for destruction, "...and he [Gideon] is going to destroy us, that is, mother along with children." (*[E]t incipiet consummare nos, id est matrem cum filiis*). This reference to mothers and children is metonymic: it brings to mind part of the frame of war, where women and children are the ones least able to defend themselves and hence most easily killed or taken as spoil. As a metonymy, it is meant to refer to the entirety of war.

But the reference brings to mind not only the totality of battle but also the suffering of the "hidden" victims of war who are not actually involved in the fight at hand. Rather than brave combat, we see helpless women and babies cut down.¹⁶

¹⁶ This brings into question, of course, from whose viewpoint are we reading? Yes, this is probably just shorthand for the destruction of the entire community. But who

This use of the word mother reminds the reader that some of the nastiest consequences of military action are never seen on the battlefield. This is not normally the perspective that one receives of war in the book of Judges.

10.2.6 *Seila*

The next use of the word *mater* occurs at *LAB* 40:4, when God speaks of how Seila is wiser than her father and the wise men and that her death will be precious to God always. He ends by stating that she will “fall into the bosom of her mothers,” . . . *abiens decidet in sinum matrum suarum*. According to van der Horst, this unusual phrase, found nowhere else in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, is the feminization of a phrase normally spoken about men. Alternatively, Brown points out the echo of Lamentations 2:12, where the dying virgins and infants pour out their lives to their mother’s bosoms.¹⁷ The latter is certainly in keeping with the lament that follows.

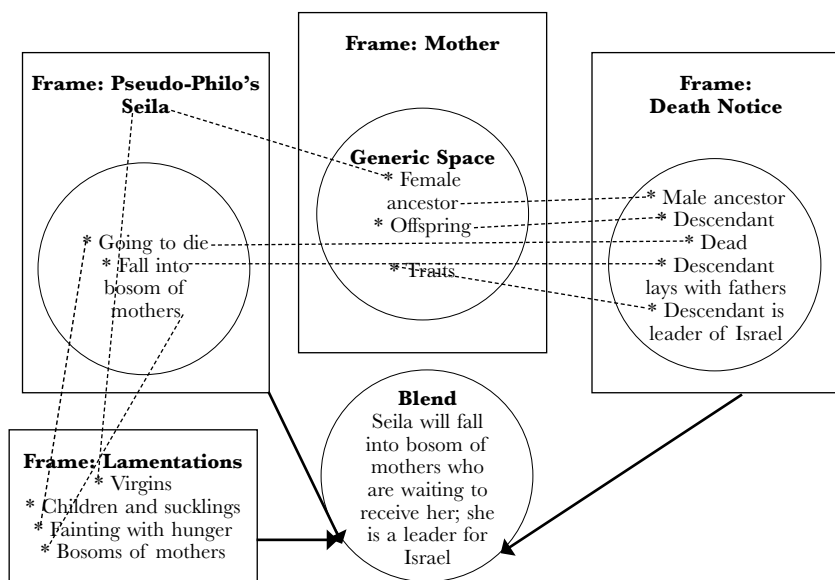
It is not improbable that both the standard death announcement for leaders¹⁸ as well as the Lamentations quote was cognitively activated when the audience heard this line. But while Lamentations provides a good echo for the virgin grief that follows immediately on this line, we should remember that here at *LAB* 40:4 God is speaking of a young woman who is pleasing and wise. The torturous pain of siege-induced famine is probably not the main point here, but rather the comfort of a mother’s bosom.

One other clue is available to us. In the Lamentations quote, multiple children are pouring out their lives in the laps of multiple mothers. In the standard death notices, each man individually goes to his fathers, multiple. Since Seila—singular—is falling into the bosom of her mothers—plural—it seems more likely that, rather than activating the picture of a child fainting with hunger onto her mother, we are meant to imagine the comfort of the lap of one’s ancestresses.

sees the mothers and babies that die, rather than the valiant men? Isn’t it the ones left at home after the army is clobbered? It’s worth considering, once again, whether Pseudo-Philo is a woman.

¹⁷ *The virgins of Jerusalem let their heads hang to the ground. And my eyes are at an end with tears; my inward parts ferment, my liver is poured on the ground for the ruin of the daughter of my people; in the fainting of children and babies in the city’s plazas. They say to their mothers, Where are grain and wine? In their fainting they are like the wounded in the plazas of the city, in their pouring out their lives to their mothers’ bosoms.* (Lamentations 2:10a–12, Revised Standard Edition.)

¹⁸ See, for instance, *LAB* 28:10, where Kenaz dies and is laid with his fathers.



Blend: Seila in the Bosom of Her Mothers

Given this, van der Horst's contention that the notice that Seila was going to her mothers functions as the female equivalent of the standard death notice for male leaders seems correct. This interpretation raises Seila to the level of a good leader, as I argued previously in chapter 3.

10.2.7 *Dedilah and the Ten Commandments*

Chapter 44 contains multiple uses of the word *mater*, in reference to Dedilah as well as in an allusion to the 4th commandment. The narrator once calls Dedilah the mother of Helio (v. 2) and once Micah's mother (v. 5). Micah speaks to her as "mother" at verse 4; and God calls her Micah's mother in verse 9. In that same verse, God also refers to Dedilah speaking to Micah "as a mother chastising her son," *tamquam mater castigans filium suum*.

The fourth commandment is mentioned twice in this chapter, both times by God. The Lord is furious with the idolatry with which Micah has seduced the Israelites, and in verse 6 he riffs through the commandments and how Israel agreed to each one. This recitation is followed by a diatribe where God reshapes every single commandment as a hedge against idolatry. God says, "As for my telling them to honor father and

mother, they have dishonored me, their creator. (*Propter quod dixi eis ut diligere patrem et matrem, me inhonorificaverunt creatorem suum.*)

Most of the blends offered by this chapter are quite straightforward. As far as one can tell, Dedilah's relationship to Micah (and Heliu) is that of biological mother; likewise, the commandments speak of what can be assumed to be one's biological mother. Two blends, however, are worth mentioning.

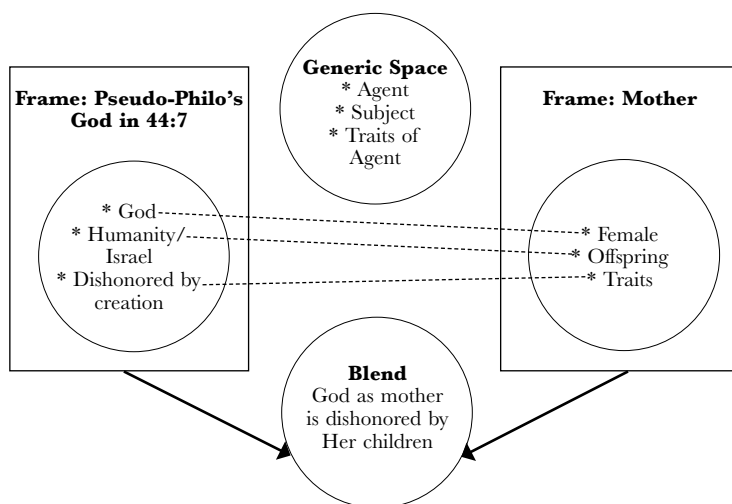
The first is God's notice that Dedilah would speak to Micah as a mother chastising her son. The blend here gives us a vision of motherhood that involves chastisement of a grown son. This is not an unusual blend: we also saw the same thing when Deborah chastised Israel, though the relationship was metaphorical, not biological. Still, this is the second time we have heard of mothers correcting sons, and there is no question whether this is an appropriate role for a mother, since it is God who envisions her correcting her son for his great sin.

The second blend worth our notice is God's statement that when one does not honor one's parents, one is dishonoring God, their creator. As LAB 44:7 puts it, *Propter quod dixi eis ut diligere patrem et matrem, me inhonorificaverunt creatorem suum*. Jacobson translates this, "As for my telling them to honor father and mother, they have dishonored me, their Creator." He makes the point that many rabbinic texts see respect for parents as equivalent to reverence for God; he also notes that Philo says the first five commandments deal with God, parent of everything, and the last five with parents, who create individual humans. While he sees the connections in terms of subject matter, Jacobson also observes that neither of these seem to describe exactly what is meant here, and he argues that Pseudo-Philo's meaning seems a bit obscured.¹⁹

Mapping this remark as a cognitive blend can help us sort out just what is meant. This sentence stands in relationship to the ones preceding and following. They share similar structure: a specific commandment is invoked, and then a particular sin. So, for instance, the line before reads, "And as for the day of the Sabbath that they agreed to keep, they did abominable things on it." (*[E]t diem sabbati, quem acceperunt ut custodirent, operati sunt abhominamenta in eo.*)

In this harangue, God recalls every single commandment, along with the people's agreement to observe it; then their offense against the commandment is linked to idolatry. The result is a kind of double-whammy

¹⁹ Jacobson, *Commentary*, 1016.



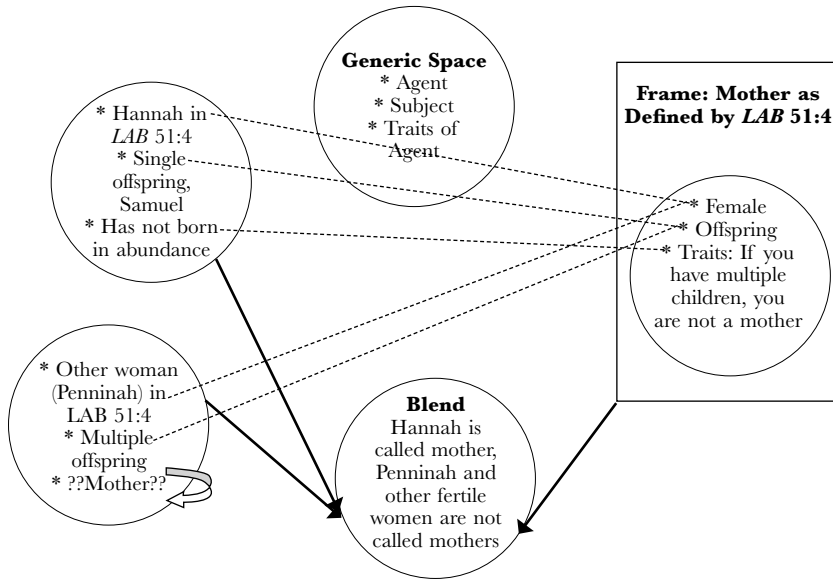
Blend: God as Mother

sin. It stands to reason that the sentence under question would employ the same reasoning: recitation of a commandment followed by an example of breaking the commandment in a way that is idolatrous.

The cognitive blend, of course, is that God is putting God's self in the role of father and mother, as well as in the role of Creator. This combines the rabbinic meaning, where parental respect is likened to reverence for God, and Philo's understanding that God is parent of humanity. The double-headed sin here is disrespect for God as God, creator of the world, as well as disrespect for God the parent. Creating and parenting are interwoven. So if we were to ask, *How is a mother understood in this sentence?* the answer would be, *A mother is understood to be a creator like God.* And if we asked, *How is God to be understood in this sentence?* the answer would be, *God is understood to be a progenitor, like a mother.*²⁰

Dedilah and her son Micah are mentioned twice again in *LAB* 47:7 and 47:12, but again, the text offers no additional input to the construction of the word: the reference is to the biological relationship. Mother and son sin together, and are punished together.

²⁰ This is not to say, of course, that the same blend is not available for "father," but we are not considering the local meaning of the word "father."



Blend: Hannah as Mother, Peninnah (and other fertile women)
 as Not-Mother

10.2.8 *Hannah*

Hannah's story is all about motherhood, but the word itself is only used once, and that is in her triumphal song of praise in Chapter 51. In verse 4, Hannah redefines who is really a mother when she claims that it is "not those who possess many things [who] will be called rich, nor those who have born in abundance [who] will be called mothers." (*[U]t non qui possident plurima dicantur divites, sed nec que pepererunt in habundantia matres audient.*)²¹

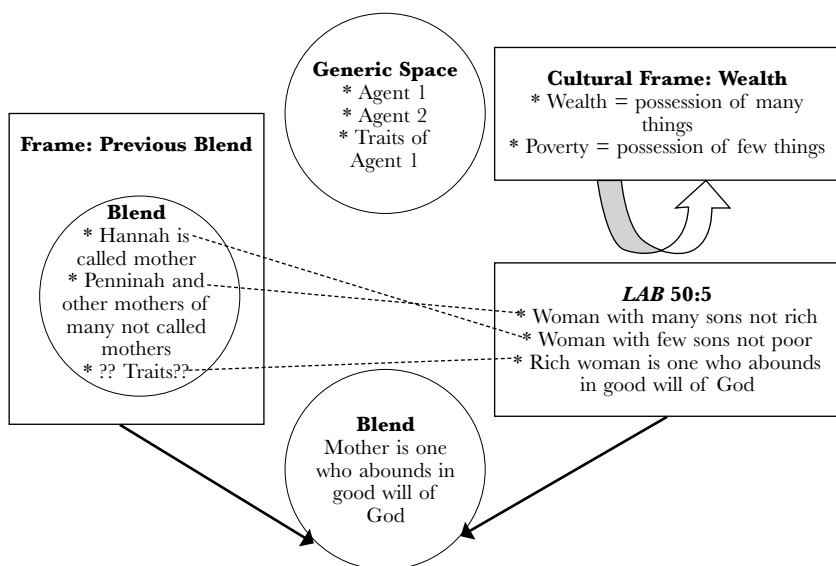
This line doesn't rate much attention from commentators, except for the textual difficulties. Most see this as a revision of Hannah's claim in 1Samuel 2:5 that the mother of many has languished. I would argue that it is more likely related to Hannah's prayer in 50:5, where she declares, "I know that neither is the woman who has many sons rich nor is she who has few poor, but whoever abounds in the good will of God is rich." (*Et ego scio, quia non que in filiis multiplicatur ditata est, neque minorata est eguit, sed que habundat in voluntate Dei ditata est.*)

²¹ Reading *sed nec que* with the text, as does Jacobson, instead of *sed que*. As Jacobson observes, there is surely some corruption here.

The second part of 51:4 clearly says that the most fecund will not be called mothers. This blend gives us the information, then, that a mother is not someone who has a lot of children. This seems a little counter-intuitive: if we define motherhood biologically, then it stands to reason that the more times one experiences the biological event of motherhood, the more one is a mother. So we must assume there is some metaphoric meaning to the text.

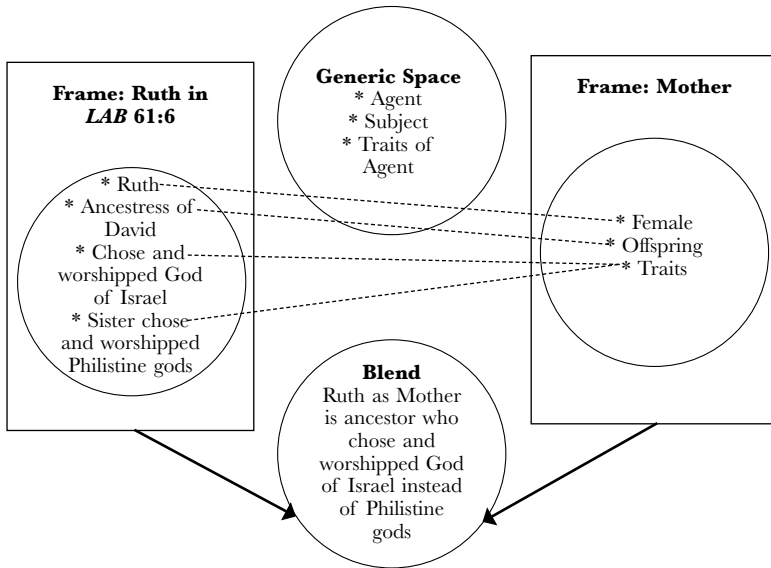
As we can see from this mapping, the metaphoric meaning comes in when we define the word mother. Since these lines in 51:4 echo the lines of 50:5, I would argue that we need to look for meaning there.

In the mapping below, the lines in 50:5 directly contradict the common knowledge of wealth and poverty and provide a new definition of richness. It is that metaphorical richness which Hannah possesses: the good will of God. Motherhood is not tied to fecundity, a biological fact, but to one's relationship with God, a spiritual fact.²²



Blend: "Mother" is One who Abounds in Good Will of God

²² There are five other mentions of the word *mater* in the story about Samuel. In *LAB* 53:10, God speaks to Samuel about the sins of Eli's sons, mentioning the injunction against eating the mother with the young, and then predicts a measure-for-measure punishment whereby mothers will die with daughters and fathers with sons. In 53:11, Samuel bemoans his mother's prayer for a son, questioning the wisdom of its fulfillment. In 52:12, Samuel does not want to tell Eli about his revelation from God, and Eli reminds that his existence as well as this prophesy were predicted, referring to Samuel's mother Hannah twice. In all of these instances, the reference is to biological motherhood.



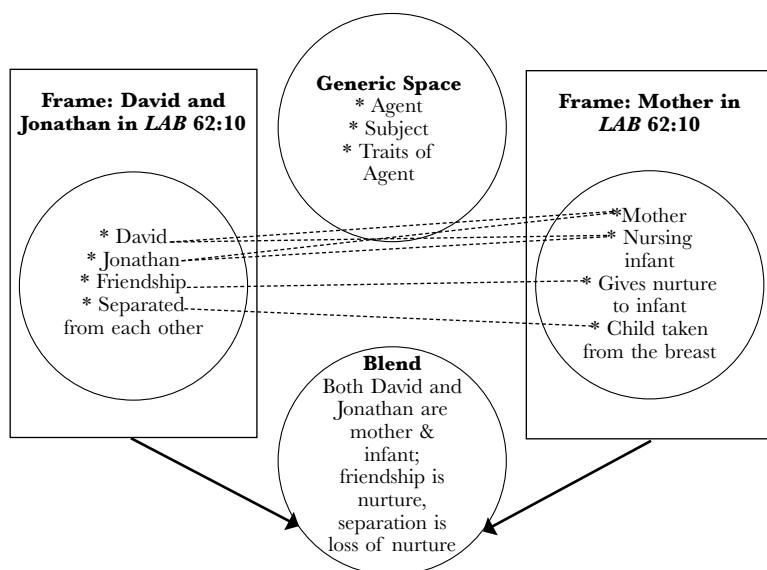
Blend: Ruth as God-fearing Ancestral Mother

10.2.9 *Ruth and David*

David sings of the jealousy of his brothers and abandonment by his mother and father in *LAB* 59:4; again, this is a reference to biological relationship. In Chapter 61:6, David claims that his mother was Ruth and Goliath's mother Orpah; of these two sisters, Orpah chose the gods of the Philistines while Ruth chose the Lord. Hence Goliath's death is will be at the hand of his avenging kinsman.

This "mother" reference is not biological mother but biological ancestress. But the relationship is not confined to biology. Ruth is also David's spiritual ancestress: she worshipped Israel's God while Orpah went after false gods. In this instance, a mother is not just a biological ancestor, but she is a person who takes personal risks in order to serve the God of Israel. Ruth, here, evokes the same blend that we saw when Amram referred to Tamar as "our mother."

The final usage of the word *mater* in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* occurs at 62:10, when Jonathan and David are preparing to separate from each other. Jonathan declares that their separation was going to be "like an infant who is taken away from the milk of its mother." (*Et nunc tamquam infans qui auferetur a lacte matris sue, sic erit separatio nostra.*)



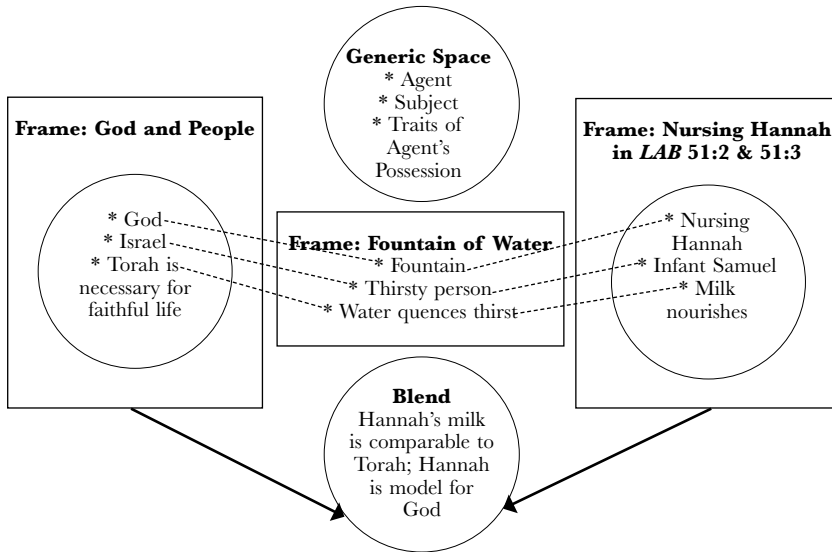
Blend: Jonathan and David's Friendship as Mother Nursing Child

The mother in this line is a nursing mother, most likely the biological parent of the child. What's unique about this statement is the comparison of the loss of male companionship to the loss of the breast. What is gone forever when one quits nursing is a certain kind of comfort, nourishment, and ease.

In the mapping, a maternal act of physiological and emotional nourishing becomes the equivalent of psychological companionship. David and Jonathan are mutually maternal nurturers and hungry infants. Men are mothers; men are babies. Mothers are as important to life as one's adult compatriot.

10.3 OTHER BLENDS RELATED TO MOTHERS AND MOTHERING

In addition to the use of the word *mater*, *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* has many other ways of referencing mothers and motherhood, such as nursing, breasts, and the act of labor. Some of these passages will be examined below.



Blend: Hannah's Milk is Comparable to Torah for Israel

10.3.1 *Hannah*

There are numerous references to nursing, nursing mothers, and suckling infants (*LAB* 2:10, 9:16, 30:4, 39:7, 51:2–3, 55: 4, 6, 8, and 10) throughout *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*.

In one of the most memorable of the references to nursing, Eli tells Hannah at 51:2 that the milk of her breasts is established as a fountain for the twelve tribes. (*[E]t lac mamillarum tuarum constituas in fontem duodecim tribuum.*) Later, Hannah commands her breasts to drip and relate their testimonies, for they have been ordered to give suck. (*Stillate mamille mee et renunciate testimonia vestra, quia preceptum est vobis lactare.*) (51:3)

Jacobson points out the midrashic exegesis where the Torah is milk to Moses and Aaron. He also notes that Jeremiah 2:13 and Isaiah 66:12 use “fountain” metaphorically, Jeremiah to speak of God as the fountain, and Isaiah to speak of Jerusalem.²³ But he does not mention Isaiah 66:11, where Jerusalem’s comforting breasts are available for suck; and he argues that the point of 51:3 is that Hannah’s motherhood proves that God is good and powerful. Brown is much bolder when

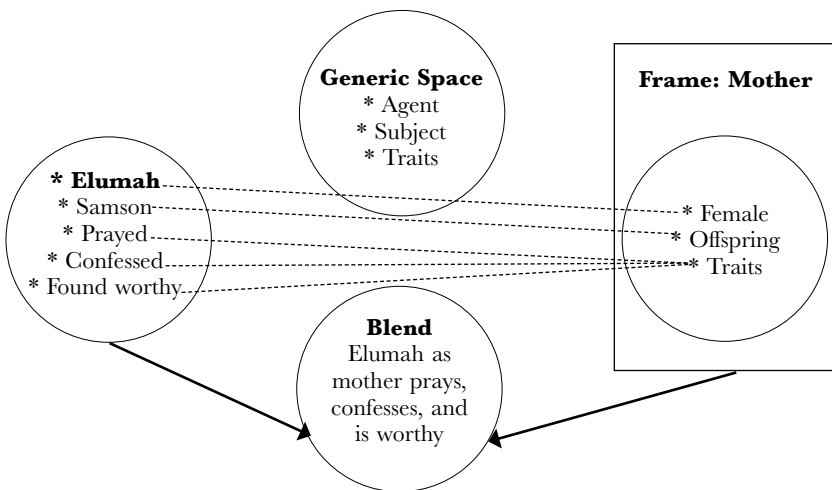
²³ Jacobson, *Commentary*, 1098.

she cites the Wisdom texts that associate mothers nursing children to Wisdom teaching humans.²⁴

Overall, it is reasonable to conclude that the comparison of Hannah's milk to a fountain is a poetic image anchored in similar, earlier, scriptural images. It is also reasonable to assume that more than biological motherhood is in question. Whether the fountain is God, Jerusalem, Wisdom, or the Torah—all of which were connected with each other metaphorically—Hannah's milk represents something very important to the community.

The diagram above represents the use of the image of “fountain as God” found in Jeremiah as one of the inputs for reading *LAB* 51.

It is Eli who tells Hannah that the milk of her breasts will be a fountain for the tribes; later she claims that her breasts will relate their testimonies as well as nurture Samuel, who is going to enlighten the people. Hannah is not just feeding the man who is going to teach Israel; she herself is a figure for God in these lines.



Blend: Elumah as Worthy, Praying, Confessing Mother

10.3.2 *Elumah*

The figure of Elumah was explored at 8.4 and 9.6. I will not repeat that analysis except to say that Elumah is a woman who prayed and

²⁴ Brown, *No Longer Be Silent*, 155–6.

confessed her sinfulness. The result of this behavior is that she became a mother.²⁵ Manoah asks, *Am I not worthy?* But one must assume from this that Elumah had been already found worthy to be forgiven, to have her prayers heard, and to be answered by God.²⁶

10.3.3 *Moses*

In *LAB* 12:5, Moses comes down from the mountain carrying the tablets and discovers the people worshipping the golden calf. He destroys the tablets in anger, and his (emotional) pain is compared to a woman in the agony of labor.

Et aperte sunt manus eius, et factus est similes mulieri parturienti in primitivis suis que, cum tenetur in doloribus, et manus eius super pectus illius, et virtus non erit que adiuvet partum eius.

He stretched out his hands; and he became like a woman in labor with her first child who, when she is seized by pains, her hands are upon her chest and she has no strength to aid her delivery.

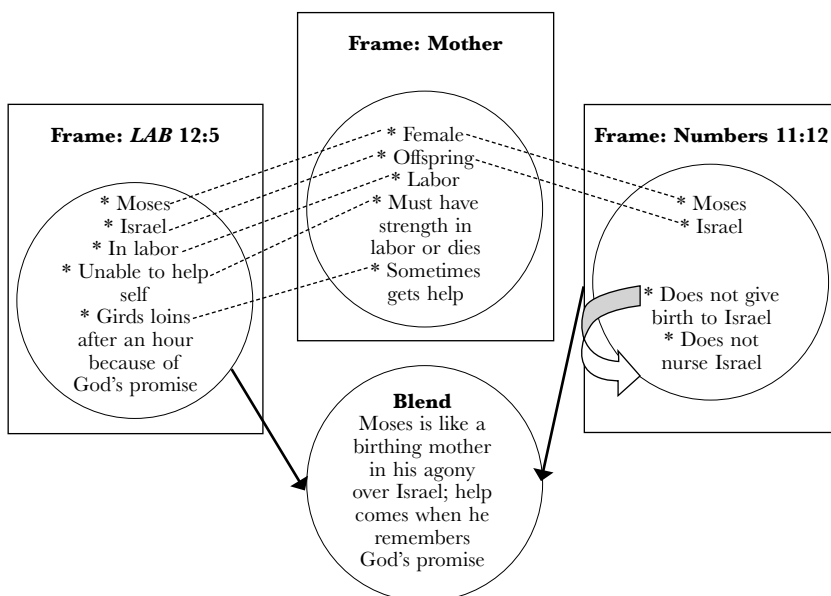
This sets up the interesting blend of Moses as laboring female. As Jacobson points out, Numbers 11:12 shows Moses asking God facetiously if he, Moses, was the mother of Israel. The answer to Moses' question is clearly "no", and for that reason Jacobson rejects the Numbers passage as a source for this image. However, once a visual image has been presented to the mind, it is available for mental blending whether or not it has been affirmed.²⁷ One need not assume literal agreement in order to re-use an arresting image; and Moses in labor certainly qualifies as an arresting image.

In the following verse, *LAB* 12:6, Moses pulls himself together after an hour, because he remembers what God told him earlier: even if the

²⁵ Yes, she argued and accused too; but God doesn't open her womb until she prays and weeps.

²⁶ One could reasonably ask whether Elumah's worthiness is predicated on her confession. Certainly it seems that other characters—Hannah, Abraham and Kenaz for instance—are found worthy after their confessions.

²⁷ Hence the phrase, "Try not to think about an elephant."



Blend: Moses as Birthing Mother in Agony

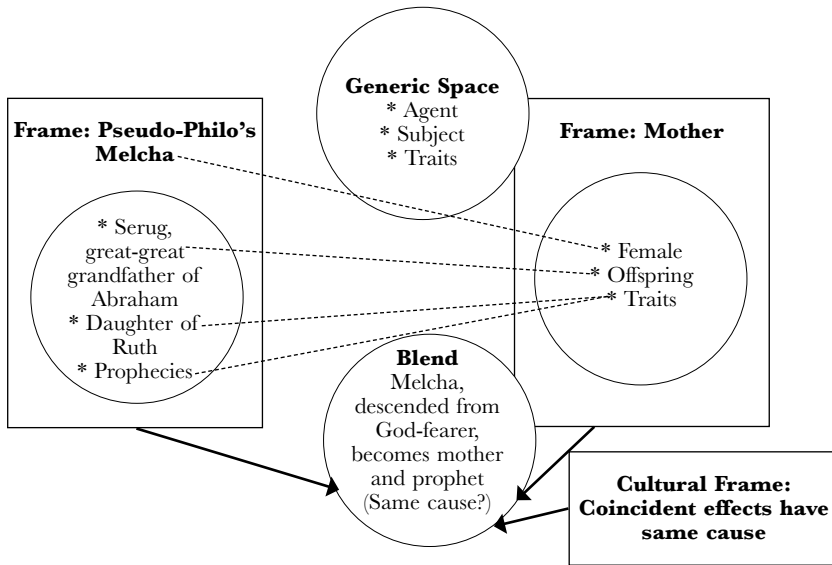
people sin, God will be reconciled with them again.²⁸ Remembrance of this promise is the help that Moses needs to survive his painful trial.

We can map God's promise, Moses' agony over the people's apostasy, and the restoration of Moses' strength due to remembrance with the frame "mother." These inputs can also be combined with Numbers 11:12 to show how such a blend works cognitively. The upshot of the blend is that the physical pains of labor are equated to the mental and emotional pain of watching the people sin; Moses can understand what mothers go through. And once the blend is cognitively active, one can also argue that mothers suffer greatly when the people sin. Their hope, too, is in the promises given by God to the community.

10.3.4 *Melcha*

In *LAB* 4:11, we learn that Reu took a woman named Melcha as his wife. Melcha is introduced as the daughter of Ruth. On the day that

²⁸ This promise from God was given just prior to Moses' coming down the mountain to find the people in idolatry, at *LAB* 12:4.



Blend: Melcha as Descendant and Prophet-Mother

she becomes a mother, she delivers not just a child but also a prophecy about Abraham. She says,

Ex isto nascetur in quarta generatione qui ponat habitationem super excelsa, et perfectus vocabitur et immaculatus, et pater gentium erit, et non dissolvetur testamentum eius, et semen eius in seculum multiplicabitur.

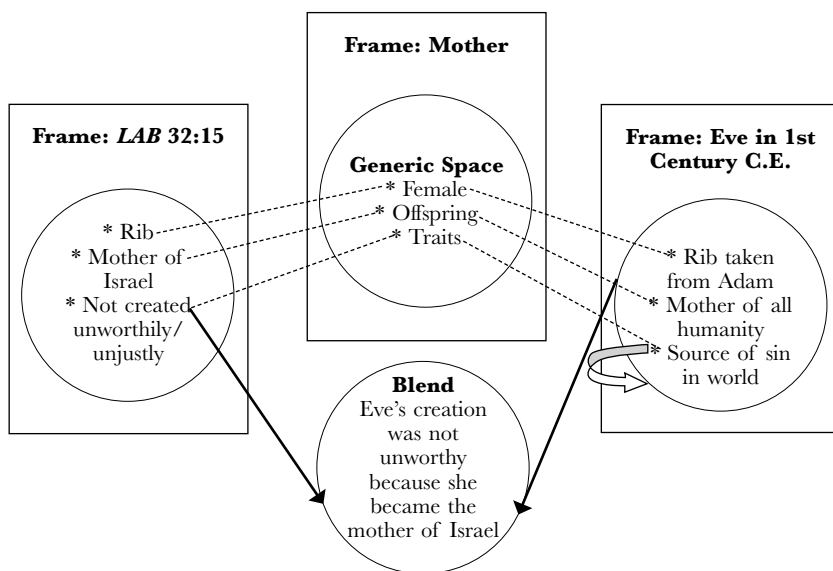
From this one there will be born in the fourth generation one who will set his dwelling on high and will be called perfect and blameless; and he will be the father of nations, and his covenant will not be broken, and his seed will be multiplied forever.

This combination of motherhood and prophecy yields the blend found above.

In this blend, Melcha becomes a mother and a prophet simultaneously. Their coincident occurrence cause one to subconsciously attribute a similar cause to both of them, because we are provided with a mental space where these two creative tasks are connected. Motherhood is invested with prophetic status.

10.3.5 *Eve the Rib*

The final maternal reference that I would like to examine occurs in the midst of Deborah's song at 32:15. Deborah has been singing of all



Blend: Creation of Eve Worthwhile Because She Became Mother of Israel

God's works, and encouraging all creation to tell out the story. In verse 15, she tells the earth to rejoice. The language is obscure—there are clearly problems in the transmission of the text—but the general sense of the line in question is that the rib was not taken wrongfully—whether from the earth or from Adam—because from that rib Israel would be born. (*Non enim iniuste accepit Deus de te costam protoplasti, sciens quoniam de costa eius nasceretur Israel.*)

There can hardly be a question that the rib under discussion is Eve. What's striking is that the line refutes the idea that the taking of the rib—that is, the creation of woman—was in some way wrong or unjust. Since by the time that *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* was written, certain circles considered Eve the source of sin in the world,²⁹ the concept that the woman shouldn't have been created is not so far-fetched.

What is unusual is this alternate interpretation. This line acknowledges the complaint against Eve—and women—while making it clear that the

²⁹ See, for instance, the 1st Century C.E. text, *The Life of Adam and Eve*, where Eve is responsible not only for the ejection from Paradise but she also continues to be deceived and cause suffering and tribulation for Adam and humanity. "The Life of Adam and Eve", Translated by M. D. Johnson, in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. James H. Charlesworth: New York: Doubleday, 1985) 258–62.

taking of the rib was worth whatever trouble or difficulty it caused. The female capacity to give birth—specifically, birth to Israel—makes up for any difficulty or suffering that her presence brought about.

This is an interesting argument in a text that presses upon the reader the concept of innate human sinfulness. There is an authority attached to Eve because she is mother to Israel; her motherhood is good in and of itself.

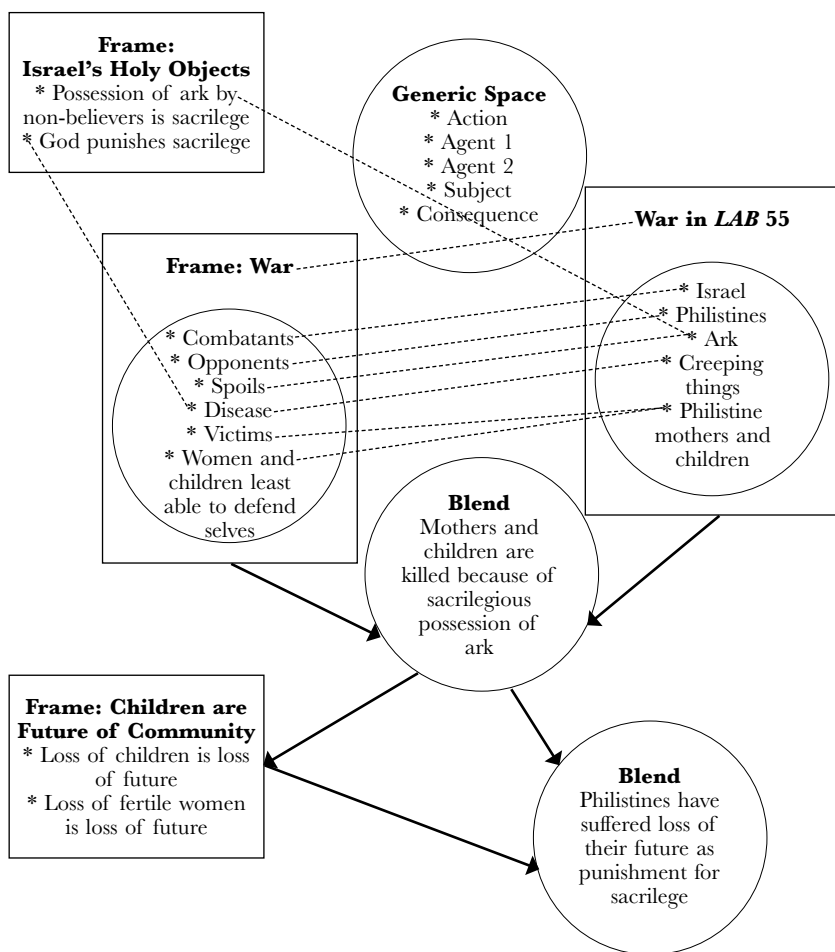
10.4 EXCURSUS: INFANTS & SUCKLING BABES, YOUR HOUSEHOLD & CHILDREN

As I noted above, there are several mentions of infants and suckling babes in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. Some of these seem a bit odd: see, for instance, 30:4 where Israel decides to fast for a week: infants and sucklings are included. So too infants and sucklings join in the community prayer at 39:7. The definition of evil behavior provided by Lamech in 2:10 includes not only destroying men but also snatching babies from the breast.

In Chapter 55, when the ark is captured by the Philistines and God decides to destroy them, the damage is wrought upon pregnant women, sucklings, and those nursing. When the final tally of dead is made, 75,000 pregnant women die; 65,000 sucklings die; 55,000 nursing women die. Only 25,000 men perish. This recounting differs greatly from the biblical story at 1 Samuel 6, where death came to the Philistines regardless of age, with tumors as symptoms.

While one can certainly argue that the theme—the plague affecting pregnant and nursing women and their children—was suggested by the biblical text (wherein nursing cows are attached to the cart in which the ark is placed), it is indeed a “remarkable” account that Pseudo-Philo gives us.³⁰ Murphy seems to assume, without much discussion, that the women and children are added to this story because of the milch cows. Jacobson explores several possible connections—the cows, Dagon as a fertility-deity, and the fact that the Semitic root of Accaron, the city in question, means sterile—but he comes to no conclusions. Neither Jacobson, Murphy, nor Perrot and Bogaert speculate about why this story has been so altered.

³⁰ So says Jacobson, who struggles to sort out the motivation of these details. *Commentary*, 1141.



Blend: Philistines Lose Future as Punishment for Sacrilege

It is worth noting that we are again seeing the cultural frame “war,” and observing the effect of a war on the most vulnerable of the population. Like the Midianites, the result of the war is loss of life among the women and children; but the damage is not equally spread. The women and children of Philistia suffer and die in disproportionate number, as punishment for the Philistine capture of the ark of Israel. This sacrilege is visited upon the community’s future, and those responsible for nurturing that future.

What makes this series of blends so alarming is the enormous loss of life among helpless children and women. For Pseudo-Philo, whose

paramount concerns are for fertility, children, and tribal continuity, this is a grievous punishment indeed.

Kenaz

In Kenaz' last testament at LAB 28:2, he reminds the people of the great punishment visited upon the apostates at the beginning of his career, and urges them to "have consideration for the members of your household and your children and abide in the ways of the Lord your God lest the Lord destroy his portion." (*Propter quod nunc, parentes domesticis et filiis vestris, permanete in itineribus Domini Dei vestri, ne perdat Dominus hereditatem suam.*)

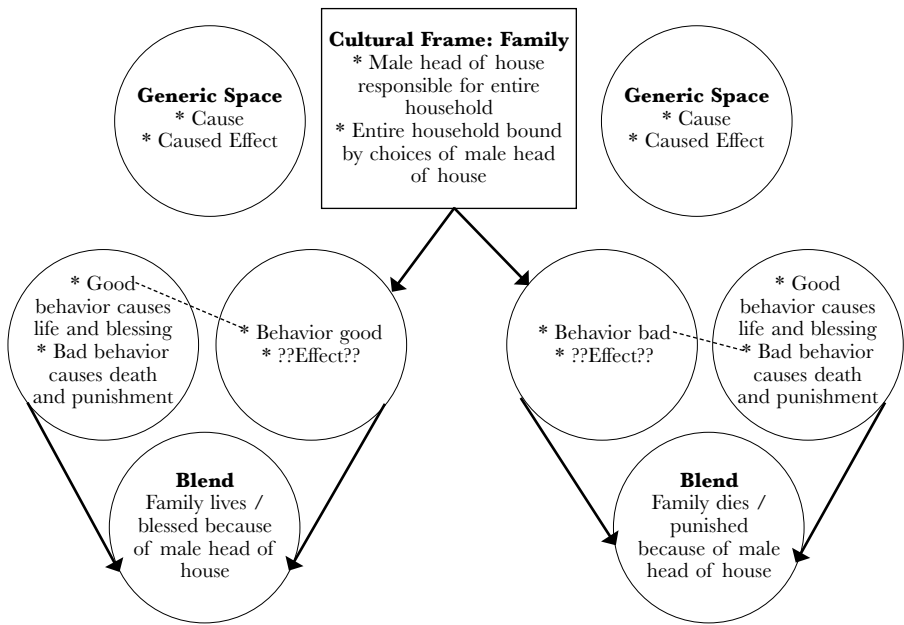
One can read the word *domesticis*, as well as the entire directive, in two different ways. There is a lacuna in 28:1, so we are not certain whether this instruction is directed toward men or all adults. If we read it as instruction to male householders, then who are the members of his household? Obviously, his sons and daughters—but they have been named. But certainly one can assume that *domesticis* is intended to encompass one's wife; calling to mind one's servants but not one's wife (or wives) seems quite odd.

If one reads this command as directed to both men and women, then we have a very unusual situation where women are portrayed as being just as involved as men in the decisions regarding the covenant, intermarriage, idolatry, and so on.³¹

I would argue that it is the male head of household addressed, and it is his choices that affect the lives of his wife and children. That was certainly what happened at the beginning of Kenaz' leadership: entire families were burned alive because the men (*viros*) had sinned. Kenaz presents these men with a counterfactual choice and begs them to factor their concern for their families into their behavior choices.

In this blend, as in the blends for the Midianites at war and the Philistines while they possessed the ark, the behavior of the men of the community has an impact on the women and children. It is that part of the men's behavior that is specifically under discussion in this last testament address by Kenaz.

³¹ While I believe that this is what Pseudo-Philo is arguing in favor of, I don't think that the author would present that portrait of the community. She bends over backwards in this text to keep traditional roles, even if she also bends those roles!



Counterfactual Blends: Behavior of Male Head of House Determinative

10.5 SUMMARY

The blends outlined above have given us data about where, and how, Pseudo-Philo injects information about mothers and mothering into the text. This analysis has shown “local” definitions for the word *mater*. These local definitions, combined with an assessment of the physical locations of the women in question, constitute big clues about *LAB*’s view of the roles of women.

Mater in this text has expanded to include women who know and interpret tradition, and teach that interpretation to the men, women, and children in their community (Deborah, Hannah, Tamar).³² What good mothers teach is varied but always consistent with the covenant: that intermarriage is wrong (Tamar), that the dead cannot intercede for the living (Deborah, Hannah), that one needs to obey the Law (Deborah, Hannah), that God’s good will is more important than a

³² Seila also knows the tradition, interprets, and instructs others. While she’s clearly not a mother, she is associated with the mothers.

lot of children (Hannah), and that preservation of community is the ultimate good (Tamar). Mothers are spiritual mentors (Ruth, Tamar) and motherhood and prophecy are linked (Melcha).

Jewish motherhood is a good in and of itself (Eve). Mothers know who their children really are and trust God even in difficult times (Jochebed); and the nurture of a mother is as important to a man's life as his best friend (David).

Mothers nurture both with milk and with their teaching (Hannah, Deborah). Chastising a grown son is an appropriate duty for a mother (Dedilah). Good mothers pray, confess their sins, and are found worthy by God (Elumah, Hannah).

God is like a mother, and a mother is like God in that she commands respect and dispenses needed knowledge (God in Chapter 44, Hannah). Moses too is like a mother, and a mother can understand Moses' anguish over the community's sin.

Finally, and most importantly, motherhood is a source of authority (Deborah, Dedilah, God in Chapter 44) and gives one the power and responsibility to instruct.

One thing about all these mothers and mother-like figures that this monograph did not examine in detail was their physical location when they speak or act. The text implies that Jochebed, Themech, Dedilah, and Melcha all spoke and acted within the shelter of the home. Two other women, Elumah and Miriam, receive prophecies while at home. Both prophecies concerned births for the public good, and both are disbelieved, but proved right later. The words and actions of Tamar, Deborah, Seila, Hannah, and Ruth³³ (and even Moses) all occurred in the public arena. They stepped out of the safety of home when God called them to do so.

These latter women, especially, are not concerned for themselves but for the family of Israel, and it is that concern that forces each woman to act and to speak so boldly, regardless of the consequences.

If the mothers of Israel felt impelled to instruct the community, what is it that they wanted to say? Some of their messages were direct, such as the injunction against intermarriage and the exhortations to avoid idolatry and obey the law. But I would argue that their message is also,

³³ As David speaks of her in 61:6, she "chose for herself the ways of the Lord and walked in them." (*Ruth autem eligit sibi vias Fortissimi et ambulavit in eis.*)

and importantly, about the appropriateness of woman-as-interpreter and messenger.

The examination of the blends relating to mothers and children showed us that *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* has an ongoing concern for the way that women and children are affected by intermarriage, idolatry, and war. It is mothers and children who have the least say and the most to suffer; and their suffering and death can jeopardize the continuity of Israel.

I would argue that Pseudo-Philo advocates letting women speak publicly about the choices being made by the community because they, and the children in their care, can be the most grievously affected by those decisions. Their right to do this is grounded in the authority of motherhood. This text makes a great effort to couch all these bold women as mothers; I would argue that it is not to silence them or to diminish their autonomy, but to establish a precedent for women speaking, interpreting, and even chastising men in public arena.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

11.1 COGNITIVE THEORY, LITERARY METHODS, AND THIS ANCIENT TEXT

In Part One, I introduced the text as well as the findings and methodology of Conceptual Blending and Metaphor Theory. This monograph set out to establish findings in two separate but related areas. The first question addressed was methodological: can one use contemporary cognitive blending theory to analyze an ancient text? The second question concerns the way that women are viewed in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*: how do these women's portraits relate to Pseudo-Philo's overall theology and ideology?

In the Part Two, I attempted to see whether or not the application of cognitive research was compatible with the methodologies of narrative analysis, as practiced by Robert Alter, and rhetorical criticism, as outlined by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca. In both cases, I found compatibility between the methods. However, in both case I also found that conceptual blending analysis revealed flaws in each method's structures for reasoning, and highlighted difficulties in interpretation and usage.

11.1.1 *Conceptual Blending and Narrative Analysis*

Conceptual blending analysis provides a more powerful and accurate methodology than Robert Alter's narrative analysis. While Alter can tell us how something works—e.g., that repetition of a word or phrase causes the reader to notice connections in the text—he cannot say why it works. Because he does not provide a theoretical basis for his findings, he is not in a position to critique an alternate reader's claims. Alter himself may not wish to speculate about other's readings, but given the wide and wild range of literary methods and interpretations currently employed by scholars, those who find his work intuitively satisfying are left without the grounds to defend it. His style of narrative criticism has been effectively marginalized in today's literary world.

11.1.2 *Conceptual Blending and Rhetorical Analysis*

Conceptual blending analysis provides a more powerful and accurate methodology than rhetorical analysis for three reasons. First, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's rhetorical work has its philosophical base in the work of Aristotle and other ancient rhetoricians. But inherent in those philosophical underpinnings is the classical notion of categories. In order to speak of the rhetorical function of a language unit, one must first classify and categorize that unit. As I argued in chapter two, the classical understanding of categories is problematic, and the attempt to classify using this model is, in the end, impossible. There will always be some phenomenon that escapes exact classification, or fits into two or more classes. Hence one reads the work of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca and notes the unending proliferation of frames within which one could analyze a given statement. The authors even note, as they go about developing the multiple classes, that certain arguments could fit just as easily into one type as into another.

Rhetorical analysis, from this perspective, involves the never-ending search for the right category in order to describe what it is that something does. Alternatively, conceptual blending theory enables us to see virtually every linguistic construction as a combination of inputs, frames, and counterfactual blends, some of which change as the argument progresses and some of which remain the same. Blending theory both simplifies the process and analyzes by function rather than class.

Like narrative criticism, rhetorical criticism can tell us what some particular formation means but not necessarily why. Having a name for the effect that one observes is not the same as being able to explain why that effect happens: why one arrangement of words means one thing while the same words arranged differently means something else.

Finally, rhetorical criticism, like narrative criticism, is not equipped to deal with "reading in" of the kind offered by Polaski's article on Tamar. Neutrality does not exist in the linguistic world, and every composition has a background; however, that background is not always under discussion. When one examines Polaski's analysis of *LAB* 9, what rhetorical category can tell us that the author did not intend to deal with incest? How can one argue, *Yes, incest is part of the story the author has introduced here*, and still claim that the writer is choosing to ignore it? Rhetorical analysis cannot necessarily help us say why one interpretation is better than the other in such a case.

11.1.3 *Conceptual Blending and Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*

When I began this study, I wrote on my wall this one sentence: *I am taking what good, insightful critics do intuitively, and showing how to do it systematically and in harmony with the scientific findings about the human condition.*

The discipline of conceptual analysis makes one work very closely with the assumptions one brings to the text. The tedious work of mapping a metaphor or a description or the imperative use of a permissive forces one to recognize where and what one might be reading into a text, as well as where one is missing something that was common knowledge to the author and the audience. A good and intuitive critic, grounded in a comprehensive historical-critical understanding of the milieu of the text, may be able to come to the same conclusions. But without a careful examination of the mental blends, how can one notice what it is that one does not know, and how can one ride herd on one's own tendency to discover a favorite theme at work in the text?

When I was working on Chapters 39 and 40, I very badly wanted to argue that Seila's death had saved Israel. Certainly, that is how the biblical text tells the story. And in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, Seila states firmly that she has to give her life, and that her willingness is central to the efficacy of the sacrifice. She herself makes the connection to Isaac and his consent.

But repeatedly attempting to follow the blends that the text actually provides (as opposed to the ones I wanted to see) made me realize that I could not argue that her death saved the people. God made it clear that the war was won because of the people's prayers. So I was left wondering just what was happening and why God spoke so positively of her wisdom and death but was so clear that her father's vow—and hence, the performance of that vow—had nothing to do with victory.

It took mapping and re-mapping the blends to realize that there was a second offering being made simultaneously with the first. The first offering must be made, since a vow cannot be broken, and Seila must be a holocaust, as promised and as required. But Seila re-conceives of Jephthah's vow as a "rash vow", and sees herself as the sin offering. Once I saw it, it seemed obvious. But I would not have noticed it if I had not been forced to revisit the blends made by God's and Seila's speeches. My assumptions would have overpowered the text. I would have missed the way that her gender made her a particularly appropriate offering, because of the requirements of Leviticus 5:4–6. I would have missed the fact that the petition of which God approves is the petition

to go grieve over the fact that Jephthah is trapped by his vow. I would have missed the fact that when Seila brings up the story of Isaac, it is not only Abraham's rejoicing that is in question, but also Isaac's willing consent. She too must willingly consent, or Jephthah will not be able to fulfill his vow—we've already seen what a weak person he is—and hence he will never be forgiven for making it.¹

In *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* Seila does not save the nation; but she does save her father, as well as other daughters who might have been sacrificed by fathers making the same stupid mistake. Her death is efficacious, but only for Jephthah. Conceptual blending theory makes that clear.

11.2 *LIBER ANTIQUITATUM BIBLICARUM* THROUGH A CONCEPTUAL LENS: THE INTERPRETATION

Having argued that conceptual blending theory can provide insights into meaning beyond those afforded by narrative and rhetorical criticism, I would like to recap the findings of this study.

11.2.1 *Authority and the Re-Written Bible*

Virtually ignored in studies of Pseudo-Philo are the questions of how rewritten bible establishes authority for its theology and ideology—or, more accurately, how the author goes about invoking authority for her point of view. Bruce Fisk addresses this issue when he argues that the frequent invocation of secondary scripture allowed the audience to hear Pseudo-Philo's revisions as explications.² However, he himself notes that not every scriptural reference carries with it some kind of revelation for the text at hand. And while Jacobson, of all commentators, is able to trace nearly every biblical and extra-biblical reference, he makes virtually no comment on why the writer employs such a method, except to say that the author was interested in biblical education, answering questions raised by the text, and ultimately trying to help the community cope

¹ Yes, I know I'm not supposed to imagine what some character might or might not have done; but Pseudo-Philo goes to some length to give us psychological information about characters, and Jephthah has been portrayed clearly as a man who is undone with grief.

² Fisk, *Do You Not Remember*, 324–5.

with present-day suffering. While these theories are no doubt true, surely not every biblical interjection was intended for those purposes.

But as I have argued in Chapter Five, the purpose of the relentless incantation of biblical themes and sounds is not always to explain something but rather to establish something. What is being established is authority. When one uses the characters, the plots, the vocabulary, the frames and theology of the Bible to tell one's own version of the story, one evokes the Bible's authority for that interpretation.

By examining the conceptual blends behind the text, and showing how inserting a particular theology into the mouth of a known biblical character provides validation of that theology, I have shown just how Pseudo-Philo attempted to amass authority for her own beliefs about the world. We, as modern day commentators, may find the arguments of this text absurd or unbelievable or poorly reasoned; this should not blind us to what the author is attempting to do, and to the fact that Pseudo-Philo's original audience may have found the arguments convincing.

11.2.2 *God, Humans & Sin*

There is much agreement among commentators on the general tenor of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. That the text holds a negative view of humanity—including Israel—and that humanity has a natural propensity to sin is generally agreed upon. *LAB*'s vitriolic position that intermarriage with non-Jews is always destructive to the community and results in idolatry and disobedience to the covenant is also taken for granted as a feature of this text. It is hard to miss the fact that all sin is punished in *LAB*,³ and most scholars maintain that punishment happens in a measure-for-measure way.

The majority of commentators would argue that *LAB* portrays God in complete control and always justified in his actions. If disaster strikes, then the people must have deserved it. While some have interpreted this as protecting God's reputation, I would point out that in a culture based on client/patron relationships where God is the ultimate patron, such a portrayal protects the reputation of Israel, too. The honor of the client is intrinsically connected to that of the patron. If Israel is

³ With the possible exception of Kenaz, if one considers his attempt to destroy the Amorite books and stones as a sin.

defeated, it's not because their God is weak and can't protect them; it's because their God is angry at them and won't protect them.

With regard to the relationship between God and Israel as presented by *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, I think it is important to notice that there is a connection between the "humility" shown by leaders and the prayer life of the community.

In the preceding chapter, I argued that although God is clearly in charge of all that happens to humans, no one who confesses their sins and acknowledges God's freedom is ever abandoned by God. The characters who are depicted as moral authorities by Pseudo-Philo—whether authority is exhibited in their public or private behavior—always acknowledge their sinfulness and then proceed, as well as they know how, regardless to the risk to their life or reputation.⁴

Repentance, then, is an essential part of forgiveness. God cannot or will not grant mercy to the people without repentance.

11.2.3 *Even Virgins can be Good Jewish Mothers*

The biggest disagreement among scholars has to do with Pseudo-Philo's view of women. Do they carry the central themes of the text, as van der Horst argues, or are they all reduced to maternal roles as Halpern-Amaru claims?

As I argued in Chapter Ten, Pseudo-Philo does indeed reshape the stories of biblical women to emphasize the theme of motherhood. Hardly any woman escapes this class: even Seila, who is pointedly not a mother, is reshaped to share the same characteristics as real Israelite mothers in the text. Pseudo-Philo goes so far as to use maternal metaphors to speak of God and Moses!

But just because biblical women are remade as mothers in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* does not mean that these women do not carry the central themes of the text. In its constant representation of mothers, *LAB* revises the notion of motherhood itself. Motherhood is reconstructed as a source and reason for power. A mother's authority to instruct and admonish her children is transferred from the home to

⁴ With, of course, the exceptions of Deborah and Seila; I have addressed this apparent discrepancy in Chapter Nine.

This same necessary repentance also showed up in my analysis in Chapter 3, Section 3.3, of the blends involved in **War Assemblies**. That investigation revealed that every successful battle is preceded by a war assembly that contained prayer and the acknowledgement of sinfulness.

the community at large. According to *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, the good Jewish mother's influence should extend to the public world. She should interpret the tradition, live out the implications, and proclaim her findings in the bosom of the community. Like Tamar, the story of a mother's actions in the face of trouble can become a good teaching tool for male elders. Even if certain of her public actions aren't quite fitting for a woman, the fact that she acts with good intent will prove that she is doing right.

So what does this tell us? *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is not some feminist screed attempting to break 1st century Jewish women out of the traditional roles dictated by biology and reinforced by culture. Instead, it is both traditional and subversive: a document that celebrates and re-envisions traditional female roles, imbuing them with authority that is not limited to the household. Jewish women have something to say about intermarriage, and the covenant, and the community's future; and the grounding to speak out on these issues comes from their "God-given" roles. They don't seek anything more than motherhood; but motherhood—as defined by this text—is enough for what they have to say and do.

The stories of women in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* are not just incidental to the text. If the embellishments of the author were deleted, we would be missing some very important points in Pseudo-Philo's theology. We might miss seeing that intent is at least as significant as action; we might not understand just how important a Jewish wife and mother is to a man; we could forget that even a grown son needs correction; we might interpret the law incorrectly and break our vow; we might acknowledge our mistakes to God but forget to do so with another; we might try to save our own skins but risk the soul of a family member; we could assume that our ancestral covenant is sufficient to save us.

I mentioned, in my introduction, that I am convinced that this text was written by a woman, because the world it sees is centered on marriage, fertility and children. The general approach advocated by this text is not armed conflict: while it retells stories of military engagement, the preponderance of *LAB*'s new material deals with community and interpersonal discord, reflection, and resolution. Quiet resistance is preferred to flashy conflict and building up community is preferred to seeking individual good.

Virtually every scholar believes that *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* was written during a time that Judea was occupied by foreign powers and Jews lived in near proximity to gentiles. Such a situation would surely

put Jews under stress to either rebel or assimilate—and we know that both solutions were tried in the 1st century C.E. I would argue then that the solutions proposed by Pseudo-Philo are the solutions of women, uniquely suited to a time when one is without temporal power and still trying to resist the loss of one's own community that comes through intermarriage and syncretism.

If Pseudo-Philo tells us that foreign women will definitely lead Israelite men astray, she also tells us that Israelite women will just as surely save them. Mothers and virgins are just as important for holding the nation together as male warriors, princes, and wise men. In *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, it may just be that the best man for the job, sometimes, is a woman.

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